THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE HINDUS

"The Book on India's Regeneration"

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FOREWORD BY

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FOREWORD

I have read Mr. S. C. Mookerjee's thesis on "The Decline and Fall of the Hindus" with great interest, and do not hesitate to say that on the dawn of the New India which is coming every one who has the Good of India at heart should read and ponder over the causes of our national degeneracy as diagnosed in it. It is a thoughtful product of deep study.

Without knowing the causes of a disease it cannot be cured. So it is with national degeneracy. To my mind it is the book on India's regeneration.

Brahmanism with its rigid Caste system in the social fabric has been the curse of India. More than anything else it has stood in the path of our progress, retarded the growth of nationality, and has been, in a word, the prolific parent of our present-day misfortunes.

We are loud in demanding political privileges, in claiming the inalienable rights of British Citizenship, while in the same breath we are not prepared to yield a tittle or abate a jot of the usurped privileges to our so-called depressed classes.

Democracy is now in the air. The very atmosphere is surcharged with it. Unless we take our submerged countrymen by the hand, concede to them with a good grace their rightful place in the social hierarchy, our cry for political rights amounts to a hollow mockery.

Mr. S. C. Mookerjee, himself a high caste Brahman, philosophically and at the same time feelingly and with a degree of patriotic fervour and inspiration, discusses the causes which have brought about the decline and fall of the Hindus.

I commend this thesis to the mature consideration of our countrymen.

P. C. ROY.

THE UNIVERSITY SCIENCE COLLEGE.

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THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE HINDUS

To most of us, the words "Decline and Fall" in the title of this paper would be but a reminder of Gibbon's great historical work on the Roman Empire which declined and fell.

In adopting his nomenclature the ideal is set before me, however humble and ill-equipped I may be, as to what my task before you should be.

The subject matter of my paper is not without its difficulties. The vastness of the field I have to survey makes me feel diffident, but not to unbosom myself before you who, I feel sure, would give me a patient, nay, an indulgent hearing.

To the great historian Gibbon, as you may well understand, his task was well suited to his intellect, training and pen. The decay and downfall of Rome, which he has immortalised, hardly touched his inner-man, for he was not a Roman or in any way connected with its ruin.

He was a hard-headed northerner to whom the Roman Empire, as essentially an institution that declined and fell, was no doubt from a historical point of view of profound interest; but that interest is fairly comparable with the interest of a chemical analyser in the laboratory, when he has to examine the ingredients of the poison which someone else's child had taken and died of.

Hindu-India, notwithstanding its decline and fall, regarding which I have yet to convince you, is still for me a living India in which I live and have my being, however putrified its atmosphere may seem to others who have other homes to run away to.

The study therefore of Hindu-India and the proper interpretation of its message as a civilising force in the world, affecting millions upon millions of my own countrymen, are of vital consequence to me, which Gibbon could never feel for decadent or fallen Rome.

India of the ages—India of the Sages—of snow-white antiquity rivalling that of her own Himalayas—sacred mother of the Vedas and the Upanishads—on whose breast the spiritual waters of the Sankhya and the Yoga, commingling with the noblest and the best of the teachings of Buddha and Sankara, have produced an Ethico-Psychic system of rational philosophy, at once altruistic, all-embracing and transcendental, which revealing the riddle of the universe, leads the initiate and the seeker to the key of the mystery of life and death—Her we adore.

No country can show a greater or a more heroic record than India, for taking systematised steps for the uplift of the sordid, selfish, clayey, fleshly, and brutish spirit i[illegible] man and so subdue, shape and polish the animal in hi[illegible] by the infusion of that real light of self-knowledge, se[illegible] culture, self-reliance and righteousness as to make h[illegible] the very image of God.

In this alone, if not in anything else, she still sta[illegible] as the Queen-Instructress of the World, unparalle[illegible] unique and withal grossly misunderstood. She, the very embodiment of mystery, has that sibylline smile playing about her countenance, suggestive of supreme confidence in herself, born of that deep conviction, which when given utterance to means that "Even these days shall pass away."

Hers has been the civilising influence that soothed, tamed, and humanised the savage Huns, Sakas, Jats, Scythians and other wild and fierce tribes that came to

rob and plunder her but stayed on to worship her as mother, feeling proud to be assimilated and absorbed into her body politic, through her four wide gateways of the Caste, according to aptitude and merit only of the party desirous of Hindu-citizenship, which in other words meant submission to the Brahmanic heirarchy, before Brahmanism decayed and became colour-blind, hide-bound and rigid, confining the benefits of her polity, light, learning and civilisation from father to son, by way of vested inheritance.

From time immemorial, she has been beckoning and still beckons to all human children, to come unto her and drink of her breast and find Contentment, Joy and Peace, through the pathway of that knowledge, which comes out of practising Universal Love and in devotion to service unselfishly rendered in the cause of humanity.

Not only to the Asiatic races but to those of Greece and Egypt, she has been the giver of Light, Religion and Culture. Her hand-loom products of cotton and silk, her wares of art and craft were prized in Imperial Rome, Athens, Alexandria, not to speak of Asiatic centres.

India in the past was a land flowing with milk and honey. It had become the veritable land of Paradise not only for her own children but for all her admirers. She captivated the attraction of all. The echo of her paradisic condition reverberated through the uplands and high mountain ranges of Asia down the whispering galleries of the west, and on the rebound it got materialised, long after decay and degeneracy had overpowered her children, in the Imperial Moghul Delhi, where it came to be inscribed on the walls of her Dewany Khas in bejewelled Persian character: "If there be paradise on Earth: It is here. It is here. It is here."

Side by side of that noble picture of our great mother let me show you another picture. Holding on to her knees stand her children crest-fallen, death-frightened, poverty-stricken, miserable, wayward, contemptuously known throughout the civilised world of to-day as the Hindus, Gentoos, Hondus, Indos, nay, Natives (not "Oysters").

Such epithets will, I am assured, soon find their way into the dictionaries and Encyclopædias of the civilised races of the world and be given the following meanings and explanations:—

(1). A peculiar breed of bipeds discovered in India.

(2). A breed of two-legged curs or nincompoops (not canine) only to be found in India.

(3). A kind of Indian monster: a breed of undeveloped human beings in whom the sense or bump of shame, honour, rectitude and liberty had not germinated.

(4). Congenitally moral-cripples met with in India due to premature motherhood.

(5). Moral Eunuchs, products of barbarian Indian culture.

Thus by the combined stroke of the pen of the civilised world of to-day, Hindus will be put outside the pale of modern European civilisation and they will have to go about in that continent for purposes of education and business or pleasure as degenerates bearing about them the Brand of Cain.

Hindus degenerates! If that be the verdict of the civilised world of to-day, then a stronger or a more drastic punishment could scarcely be found in the whole of its High Penal Code.

A nation, a race, could not be humbled and humiliated more on the august stage of the world, from where, by one sledge-hammer stroke, the Hindus will be turned out to take their stand among the Negroes, the Cannibals and savages with a black mark on their racial character; though the Hindus, be it remembered, claim descent from a branch of the same Indo-Aryan family of nations as the ancient Greeks, Etruscans, and Romans, as well as the present Germanic races peopling Norway, Sweden, Denmark, and a considerable portion of the German Empire before the war.

On the eve of such a national degradation and humiliation let us all, Hindus, Mussulmans, Christians, Parsis,

Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs, who regard India as their only home and mother, think over it; ponder it over in our minds as to why, for what congenital sins of commission and omission, we are to get this black mark placed against our character.

Brethren, children of our common mother India, the shades of difference that may exist in the dogmas, rituals and religious observances and practices or social customs and usages as between a Hindu and a Mussulman or a Christian and a Parsi or a Jain and a Buddhist or a Sikh lose, as we well know, all their significance in that larger world beyond the Seas. There, faith and race, losing their primal distinctiveness, have got merged in territorial nationality.

Before that larger world, the terms 'Hindu' and 'Indian' would mean the same thing and in the ostracism which is going to be meted out to the Hindus, *eo nomine*, (by name expressed) it will be the 'Indian-domicile' which would be condemned.

Be sure, there will be no loopholes for escape on the part even of our brethren the Indian-Mussulmans and Indian-Christians, not to mention the rest. They will be regarded as Hindu-Mussulmans and Hindu-Christians and will be equally affected by the national humiliation of the Hindus. It becomes therefore a question in the deliberation of which every one who is an Indian-born should take part.

If we seriously come to think of it—it is a matter too deep for tears—too heart-rending even for publication. It is a subject regarding which an enactment of our legislatures here or that of the Imperial British Parliament cannot help us: nor should we, to preserve our self-respect, that is to say such vestige of it as we are still supposed to possess, petition the King-Emperor or President Wilson or the Chairman of the League of Nations.

The Verdict is given. The sentence is passed against us from which at present there can be no appeal; not even in the future, except through the narrow gr[illegible]ways of the

conscience of the punishers themselves, who can only be moved by our united deeds which might command their respect and inspire once more their trust and confidence in us, that we are just as human as they.

Bearing our cross manfully then, we too should have the courage of our conviction and faith in the eternal and all-pervasive principles of Truth, Right and Justice, and like our great mother be able to say to ourselves "Even these days shall pass away."

Our sages have instilled into us one great lesson, and that is to let our sneerers sneer, scoffers scoff, enemies be as hostile as they like, but that we should smile on, having faith in ourselves and in the great cosmic order of which we are a part, that wrongs are righted in the long last if we remain but true to ourselves.

So at this grave crisis it behoves us to seek for light and guidance from introspection—from within.

Black marks against our character as a Race! Let us, if necessary, sitting in camera and with closed doors, analyse amongst ourselves our racial character, our past history, the sources of our origin, our deeds and misdeeds as and when we were a sovereign state in the far off past before the Mohamedan inroads into India began, the ethics of our home-life and ideals in that behalf, as also in our religious life and the ethics of that sacerdotal rule called Brahmanism or Hinduism which we now possess, in the place and stead of the original and noble Brahmanism which was the glory of India; and it is my belief, we shall be able to locate, probe and tabulate the causes of our degeneracy and decadence.

Gentlemen, may I like Mark Antony say to you, "I have come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him. The evil that men do lives after them; the good is oft interred with their bones:" and that is precisely my attitude before you. I have come deliberately prepared not to praise and admire ourselves, even where praise or excuse or a charitable construction may be legitimately due.

My chosen task before you is to frankly—may be somewhat bluntly—point out the weaknesses in our conduct, character, and institutions, our supineness and indifference to our own good as a nation, in short our moral decadence, to which I wholly and solely attribute our decline and fall as a sovereign state in the past.

I yield to none in my reverence and admiration for our immortal past, for our immortal Rishis and Kings, who have made our Great Mother the spiritual incarnation of every thing that is holy and sacred and whom we all worship.

Gentlemen, I say it is a myth, that India has no history or that historical sense was not developed in us. It is a copy-book slander our detractors go on repeating *ad nauseam* against us, without having the patience either to study things in the original or the ability to take up research work.

How few read our Epics in the original, let alone the Puranic literature which does contain a fairly accurate record of the peoples and the geography of the country, together with that of her famous Kingly and Rishi families and their genealogies.

Our Purans are themselves complete historical and geographical works on ancient India. But her fuller history still lies buried underground and encrusted in her religious and law books, as also in the Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, Burmese, Siamese, and Singalese records. 'Seek and Ye shall find': and don't let such slanders make you waver in your quest or faith and love for the mother land.

Our detractors further tell us, that India is mere geographical expression and peopled by congeries of races. My answer is "Ye are blind and have no eyes to see the glorious unity in diversity." From Kashmere to Comorin, from Jellalabad to Chittagong and [illegible], the civilisation is still Brahmanic even in its [illegible] which should be of no ordinary pride in [illegible]

But India and Brahmanism are both in transition. Their middle-age encrustations have just commenced to peel off and the dawn of purification and renaissance, if we be but true to ourselves and to our mother land, cannot be long delayed.

Before the rising sun of that renaissance, bringing in its train scientific knowledge and width of vision, a state of things for the advent of which if we all lovingly and self-sacrificingly work together, all those shades of differences and divisions, looming so large now in the darkness of ignorance and superstition, will vanish.

We as a nation having this motto writ large in our heart of hearts, "Janani Joanmabhumischa Shargadapi Gariyashi" (which means "Superior to Heaven are they, my Mother and my Mother Land"), could we be accused of being behindhand of other nations in our love for the mother land? If it be true that that motto has been washed away and forgotten or that our love for our mother land has lessened, then, indeed, we are lost and damned for ever in this world and the next.

I dreamt that I was taken up to the lap of our Great Mother, whom I found as if in a swoon. In my dream I lovingly lifted her upon my back, and in my anxiety laid her on the examining table before a board of doctors, and as they were about to examine her, she heaved a long-drawn sigh, and I woke up to find myself writing what I have to read to you to-day.

Remember, gentlemen, with reference to our downfall, that there are certain unrelenting principles or spiritual laws which work out on the material plane. These may be grouped thus:—

(1). That the law of Karma, like that of the Nemesis, will ever seek you out and make you answerable for the least of your failings.

(2). That as you have sown so shall you reap.

(3). That as you have meted out to others so shall you be meted out to.

(4). That in life, be it national or that of an individual, there is no such thing as resting on one's oars or being in a static condition, without courting decay.

(5). That Truth, Righteousness and Justice (which three together is Dharma) are the corner-stones on which human society is based.

(6). That hypocritical cants cannot for all time cover up unrighteousness, or be a substitute for righteousness.

(7). That the foundation, rise and fall of nations and Empires vary in proportion to their adherence to or departure from that Dharma.

(8). That no individual or state or nation or race is of such a special creation as to be left unaccountable for its sins of omission and commission.

(9). That the wheel of the Almighty moves slow but grinds exceedingly small, giving no warning from which side the wind would blow to put that wheel in motion.

(10). That a house divided against itself cannot stand.

Pardon me, if I have taken up so much of your time, in introducing my main topic. Subject to necessary digressions, I want to develop my theme, chronologically as far as possible.

If a stream gets polluted, you examine it from its mouth upwards and trace it up to its source. In our case let us reverse the process and go straight to that source, or so far of it as has been found out.

Come with me for a short while then to the Trans-Indian Vedic-age and see if any poison can be found there. Let us accept, for the purposes of this paper, that the Aryan Race had their original home on the Europe-Asian or Eurasian side of the Arctic Regions as Mr. Tilak has sought to establish in his great book "The Arctic Home in the Vedas," and let us accept this calculation of the life of the Vedas or some portions thereof, which he puts down at 7000 B. C.

For causes we need not pause to enquire, that Arctic Home was broken up and clan after clan of that race migrated, for new homes and pastures, to the south, south-west and south-east.

Before that great exodus took place, and probably to preserve their own racial identity, they had, it is believed by savants, hit upon the Token or Emblem or Talisman from what they deemed to be the special peculiarities of that constellation called the "Orion" (Sanskrit Agraion or Mriga Sira), namely its belt and arrow across its forehead.

The belt of the Orion became the girdle and its arrow became the staff of those migratory sections of the Aryan clans. From this sprang up the ceremony of the Upanayan, Janau or Paita (sacred thread) as we call it in Bengal.

It is the custom, as we know, that that ceremony of Paita is conferred now on those who are born Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas. It is one of the principal pillars on which the Brahmanic hierarchy in India stands and is by no means to be trifled with.

What uses the Paita ceremony has been put to, I shall presently tell you, and I may just as well indicate to you that in this paper I have ventured to attack that venerable hierarchy which is now represented by that soulless sacerdotalism which reigns supreme in the land in the name of Brahmanism.

Let me tell you in passing that this "Girdle and Staff" or the Paita ceremony is traceable amongst the ancient Etruscans, Romans, Egyptians, Cretans and Greeks in their idol-worshipping pagan days.

But in their respective civilisations, owing to their own peculiar environments, such as climatic, economic, and enemic (*i. e.*, opposition offered by other hostile races in possession), through which they had to make their head-way, to establish themselves and gradually build up their empires, sacerdotalism and its concomitant morbid thoughts, aspirations, contemplations and practices for

the other world and of securing a better place there than had been achieved here, were less and less, and the triumph of militarism and the material prosperity of their citizens were more and more.

The ancient Assyrians and Babylonians, the forebears of the Parsis, had it, and the Parsis still have it. The Hebrews had it in their Baptismal ceremony, and these two last mentioned peoples have been victims of sacerdotalism in the past, to a greater extent than the Hindus, to which their disruption and dismemberment are due.

To our Aryan friends round the Arctic snows where, as we know, it is six months night and six months day, the advent of a ray of the sun, a ray of light from the stars above, piercing the foggy atmosphere, a spark of fire even were of infinite joy, gladness and adoration.

From these feelings spring up the origins of all our religions, shaped and moulded by the sense of utter helplessness before the black terror of death, through pestilence and diseases.

In that insanitary condition of herding together to mitigate the rigour of the cold, sexual morality was at a very low level. There was in consequence incest amongst them, as also syphilis and leprosy.

Fire and meat, preferably beef and the Soma juice, were a necessity for their homes and in a luxurious and affluent scale at the communal feasts or yajnas which were held at every change of season, lasting for days at a time, during which the Homa fires once lit, for imparting heat and roasting carcasses of slayed beasts, could not be allowed to be extinguished till the feasts were over.

These communal feasts were a special feature in the life of our Aryan forebears. Both the sexes met, they ate and drank, made love or flirted, danced and sang, making merry all round, after no doubt serious debates and deliberations as to the welfare of and dangers to their society. Politics is as old as humanity and par[illegible]olitics also. And as the society itself consisted of [illegible] clans of

fighting men and their subjugated women, their chosen leaders were great warrior-politicians.

What a source of inspiration those feasts were to the singers, the poets, the psychics, the seers, the prophets, the herbists, the time-keepers from the movements of the stars, as well as to the young men and capturable young women.

From the above nucleus or stock all sorts and conditions of civilisation were possible. In what particular line the Indian section developed we shall presently see.

In course of time they had bye-laws for regulating those feasts. At a later stage those bye-laws became the rituals, their bygone and illustrious leaders became the Devatas (the shining ones—not Gods at all), their ancient carousals, songs, dreams, prayers and aspirations, the "Ricks" or chapters of those Human Documents known as the Vedas.

There was no marriage amongst them nor was any status assigned to women. On them no Paita or Upanayan ceremony came to be bestowed to make them equal in rank with their men folks, who by that ceremony were promoted to the superior rank of the Dwijas or twice-born. For the women the only ceremony or Sanskara lay in being mated.

It is believed that in the ancient Indo-Aryan polity there existed what is called the degraded system of nationalisation of women.

The equality of the sexes that we talk of now-a-days is quite a modern shibboleth of which you find no trace in the origin of things. Food-hunters must hunt and bring the slayed beast to the home fire for cooking. Captured women must be subjugated to keep the home fire burning. Human history laid threadbare is grotesque. Embellish it as you like with gold lace and diadems, it is the history of hunting for food and the gratification of man's carnality. He who hunts and brings food is the Lord and Master and the rest who have to sit and keep the home fire lit are his slaves. On these slaves, these subjugated women, is made to rest another pillar of that baneful

sacerdotalism which is one of the principal contributory causes of our downfall.

Partially developed as they were, our Aryan friends migrated, I shall assume, to Mongolia as Pandit Umesh Chandra Vidyaratna wants to establish. If our Aryan friends left their women behind them in the Arctic regions, then probably they settled down in Mongolia, hunted and captured women, thriving and multiplying there for some centuries. This probably accounts for that trace of Mongolian blood in us which makes itself visible quite unexpectedly, in the best and purest of Brahman families.

From Mongolia our Aryan friends migrated to Iran as Pandit Umesh Chandra says they did. In the unhappy land of Iran, side by side with the development of the Vedas, you find the development of the Avesta of the Parsis. They are like twins, dressed up in different garbs, so close is the parallel. These twins, the Vedic Aryans and (putting only a comma in the place of the capital 'A' in Avesta) the 'Vestic Aryans had perpetual squabbles going on between them like two kilkenny cats. It is curious that the oldest portions of the 'Vesta, which are called Gathas, resemble in every particular the Ricks of the Vedas. Scholars say that to be able to understand the Gathas in Zend one must know his Vedas thoroughly.

The heroes of the 'Vestic clan came to be worshipped as Gods called Ahuras whom our Vedic clan nicknamed as Asuras, and our Vedic heroes, who also in their turn came to be worshipped as Gods called Devas and Devatas, were nicknamed as thieves and robbers by the 'Vestic clan. It is surmised that the Vedic-Aryans were interlopers and had to clear out and migrate to fresh fields and pastures new, namely, the Punjab and the Gangetic valley.

In Iran both these rival clans were Hero-worshippers with a vengeance, and one is maddened by the perpetual Vedic-Aryan wail:—"O Indra, thou Monarch of every thing, slay that fiend Vritra." Counter-wail from the other side as persistently greet us:—"O Vritra, thou Lord of the universe, demolish into atoms that chief of Devas or Robbers Indra," and so on, *ad nauseam*. This religious

side of too many prayers to Indra for little things has a demoralising effect on the character of the race which I want to point out to you with a great deal of emphasis.

These wailing, praying, petitioning and revenge-seeking traits in our national character have made our boys sneaks in school and at home. Even when they are full grown men, in business or profession, they do not lose this pernicious habit of being sneaks and carrying tales to quarters which should rather be avoided, as such conduct does give rise to a great deal of mischief, with the result that our elderly doctors and lawyers who have to be repositories of family secrets and scandals are not trusted to that extent by clients as they would trust Europeans in the same position.

This weakness further generates flippancy, looseness of tongue and that grandmotherly-scandal-mongering habit on the one hand, and on the other develops that 'Universal-Information-Bureau-Pose,' for the delectation alike of friends and foes. These are signs of that senility and decay under which our society is groaning.

When the Vedic-Aryans colonised the Punjab and gradually penetrated into the Gangetic valley, they did not find it a bed of roses. They met with a tremendous opposition from those already in possession, with an established civilisation no whit inferior to the civilisation brought over to India by the colonists. There were constant and prolonged feuds, hostilities, raids and battles in which the colonists were not infrequently discomfited.

The colonists had to have their captured fields cultivated, jungles cut for pasture, homesteads built, women sheltered, wild beasts hunted for food and hides, cattle tended, pitchers made, cloth sewn, bows and arrows manufactured, and battles fought, intricate ritualistic Vedic sacrifices and Yajnas performed, all at the same time, as well as diplomacy with the opposite side carried on.

The colonists were self-reliant, pilgrim-fathers, having the responsibilities and duties thrown upon them of an infant state. They had staked their existence to hold on to the fertile soil of India at any cost.

Though by their ancient ceremonial of Paita or Upanyan all were Brahmans originally, different kinds of work and labour had to be assigned according to aptitude and merit to the most capable of performing the task.

Through the necessity of division of labour we get the Vaisyas, the Kshatriyas and that special class of men learned in the Vedas and the ritualistic ceremonies therein prescribed as well versed in the reckoning of the seasons and time from the movements of the stars and the equinoxes, as in psychic and herbal healing.

Out of this class came the elders, the seers and the guides of society. The duties of inaugurating a state policy or adopting a particular line of statecraft or diplomacy fell to them. They were the lawgivers as well interpreters of that law as of the rituals.

In them you have the origin of the Brahmans, that highly honoured and select class, who retaining for themselves the old generic name, kept combined in their own hands the functions of the church and state, the latter being regarded by them as an appendage or offspring of the former, and so we are justified in referring to this select class as the priestly Brahmans who have all along been and still are the spiritual guides or gurus of the race.

The older occupiers of the soil of India, we shall comprehensively style as the Dravido-Nagas (a compound of the race-names of Dravidians and Nagas, including, for the purposes of this paper, those other races called by the colonists as Asuras, Gandharvas, Rakshasas, Daityas, Danavas, Pishaches and Bhutas) who were all better organised militarily than the colonists.

The Dravido-Nagas having been found out, by their opponents the colonists, to be simple, honest, straightforward, generous, hospitable and consequently gullible, it was a grand opportunity for the priestly Brahmans by diplomacy to circumvent their animosity, racial jealousy and prejudice against the colonists and obtain pacts, treaties and concessions on their behalf.

Thus you mark the rise of the Brahmanic sacerdotal or priestly power in India from the remotest times. They would not be kings, but they would be King's advisers, ministers and the wielders of real power in the state, and on occasions they would be King-makers also. They would allow a King to retire in the seraglio with his Queens and concubines, for years at a time, while they themselves would be carrying on the business of state.

The priestly Brahmans as a class selflessly devoted their lives empirically to the acquisition of knowledge from the hidden store-house of Nature in every sphere, from things seen as well as unseen or occult, by long years of painful meditations, experiments and practices, thus acquiring for themselves a recognised position of being superhuman in intellectual grasp and abilities: hence worthy of being prostrated unto and worshipped as Devas.

To the Kings on the one hand and the peoples on the other, they made themselves indispensable. The whole social fabric was made to rest, as it were, on the whim and pleasure of the Brahmans. The Kings fought because the Brahmans wanted it, devastated a whole province because it was necessary to repeople it by Brahmans and pro-Brahmans. After a battle it was the Brahmans who dictated the peace terms on both sides. They became a privileged class from a very remote past.

Gradually, the Dravido-Naga kingdoms in the country had to succumb to the Brahmanic influence and sway, while retaining their own independence as separate civic states. They accepted the caste system and the Brahmanic ceremony and ritual of Paita or Upanayan and of sacrificial worship by lighting the Homa fires, all such religious ceremonies being presided over by the Brahmans. Further they became adepts in the art of making and taking the Soma juice and were thus engrafted on to the body politic of the Vedic-Aryans who, being handsome, tall, broad-chested, long-armed, thin-waisted, long-headed with straight features, of light Hair

and blonde complexion, were greatly in requisition to marry the swarthy Dravido-Naga maids.

The eight forms of marriage were evolved in India as the result of the free intermixture, per class, between the Vedic-Aryans and the Brahmanised or Aryanised Dravido-Nagas and between their offspring with that of the neat Non-Aryan tribes (*i. e.*, those not brought under the Brahmanic sway).

The safety of the colonists lay in making alliances by marriage in the manner above mentioned. In this process of give and take, the Brahmans had to acknowledge and accept from the Dravido-Nagas and the Non-Aryans, their uncouth, grotesque and non-Vedic Gods and Goddesses which came thus to be engrafted into the Hindu Pantheon. It was a compromise of necessity, involving a forced departure from the Vedic cult, tradition and usage.

The riff-raffs of the Aryan and Non-Aryan communities likewise intermixed and became the Sudras, with gradations between them according to the quality of the mixture and their fitness for work, thus solving the then labour problems of the country.

The negative injunctions in Manu, as regards marriage between a Sudra and a Brahman, in some verses, and in certain others such a marriage being permissive only to a Brahman, show that before Manu the Brahmans used freely to exploit the Sudra community without the ties of matrimony.

Read between the lines of our epics, the Ramayan and Mohabharat and you will see how by means of promiscuity and polygamy through the eight forms of marriage the peoples multiplied under the Brahmanic sway, and how in the background of deeds and exploits heroic there is the Brahmanic superiority discernible, leading the Kshatriya or the kingly power by the hand, as it were, in every thing.

There cannot be the least doubt, that the Brahman was the maker of ancient India and that he was truly

great, as he only knew how to trim and adjust his sails before the wind like an efficient helmsman of the Aryan ship of state.

There had been more than one competitive struggle between the Kshatriya and the Brahman for mastery. In all such, the Brahman had triumphed, thereby shewing his superiority to the Kshatriya even in the use of arms. It is laid to the credit of the Brahman Parashuram, that to keep the Kshatriyas under control, he inflicted very heavy losses on that community 21 times, almost annihilating them. Thereby he dug the grave for the Brahman also.

The social balance was thus upset, and the Brahman, left without a rival and a competitor, grew arrogant and selfish, licentious and vicious, and he fell. With his fall the fabric of society he built up in ancient India fell also. The fall of the Brahman, the spiritual guide and guru of the race, is but another name for the fall of the Hindus. I have attempted to describe to you the story of that fall frankly and freely.

It cannot be denied that the Brahman conquered the whole of India by his diplomatic art and ritualistic and psychic craft and impressed it with his antique, sacerdotal civilisation and culture from the beginning and weathered and survived all vicissitudes of Buddhistic revolt and Mohamedan Rule, though considerably weakened in the above process of struggle for existence.

Nor can it be denied that to-day under the British system, with its broad-based, rational and righteous principle of non-interference with the people's individualistic freedom of thought or with their religio-social activities and avowed protection from molestations and exactions, the sacerdotal civilisation of the Brahman has obtained, as it were, a long lease. And thus sheltered and protected, it has been recouping its strength and trying to run in India just as strongly and as high as it had ever done in the past.

Therefore we, who belong to the Hindu population of India, are justified in regarding the Brahman the priest and the sacerdotal system of his churchless church as the sole trustee for our intellectual, moral, spiritual, and social welfare (apart from the preservation of law and order in the land for which the British Rule is here), and we must call upon him to render account to us as such trustee.

In the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda and Satpatha Brahmana, there are magnificent hymns to the One Omnipotent God of the Aryans. But the priestly Brahmans keeping that as a secret only for themselves, countenanced for the sake of impressiveness upon the people, the worship of many Gods and Goddesses according to the intellectual aptitude of the worshippers, making them spend money on feeding the caste people and in giving away large sums to the Brahman priests themselves by way of Dakhshina or Baksish. Did it matter to what Devatas were the worships offered? For according to the Brahman priest all worships were wafted to the same place, to the great throne of the Almighty.

In the Vedas, as I have already hinted, "Devata" does not mean "God" at all. It has been erroneously translated into "God" by the orthodox Pandits and European scholars. For the definition of Devatas see Nirukta (vii. 15). It says "whatsoever or whosoever is capable of conferring some advantages upon us, capable of illuminating things or capable of explaining things to us, and last of all the light of all lights, those are the fit subjects to be called Devatas."

In spreading his civilisation, the Brahman followed the course of the least resistance, without worrying about his Vedas. In surrendering the ideal of worshipping One Omnipotent God and countenancing the worship of many Gods and Goddesses, the Brahman, as the spiritual teacher and guru of the race, did not, I submit, fulfill the high national trust reposed in him.

For the masses, the real essence became shrouded in too many different names and shapes and forms. To them it became an encouragement to have too many schisms. What the Brahmans gained in extent they lost in volume. For the sake of power, prestige and pelf the Brahman sold his conscience and went on pandering to the grotesque tastes of the worshippers.

Too much adulation, far too much prostration at their lotus feet on the part of all the other elements of society, the accumulation in their hands of too much irresponsible power in the form of monopoly, their highly privileged position in the eye of the law as laid down in Manu and immunity from punishment, all these contributed to spoil India's Lords Spiritual—the Brahmans—by generating selfishness and licentiousness in them.

They went on increasing their worldly sway, but failed to exact from those heterogeneous masses who came in contact with them, that degree of culture which should have really disciplined, refined, educated, broadened, elevated and consolidated them.

To maintain their own supremacy, they encouraged division amongst the ranks, who for want of education for untold centuries, became fossil-like, inert, dumb. And no wonder that the Brahmans glorified in being the intelligenzia of the race, ascribing their origin to be the divine mouth of Brahma. Such is Vanity!

To the Brahman, every woman was accessible from the king's daughter to the commonest chandalin, and being of divine origin, a position he arrogated to himself as above mentioned, his taste in that line was not limited to numbers. He was no seeker of love in women, who came to him in shoals at his bidding and ministered unto his creature comforts. He might condescend to love her who bore him children.

To beget children he married, to legitimatise his children he married, but not to bestow love on the woman or out of love for her. He was never her seeker. She was laid down at his feet by her parents or guardians for

his condescending touch of acceptance. If she proved barren or had only daughters born to her, then someone must be found capable of giving him sons as enjoined by his Shastras.

Without sons being born to him he had to go to that Hell which is called *Poot*. To save himself from such a fate after death, he had the right on earth of tilling as many feminine fields, for the production of that desired male crop, as he was capable of maintaining.

The foregoing point of view finds support from the well-known Hindu matrimonial maxim "Putrarthe Kriate Varya," meaning :—a woman is made a wife for begetting sons. It discloses an artificial, automatic, soulless, loveless system on the basis of which the whole Hindu society's angle of vision, on the subject of love and marriage, has been corrupted and diverted to the eternal detriment of women's honour.

The offspring thus begotten without love, must be lacking in physical vigour and in various mental and psychic forces, necessary alike for the upbuilding of character in the manhood and womanhood of the race. And is it to be wondered at that we are decadent?

Too easy gratification of the world's soft things, which the Hindu society far too readily and in profusion supplied to the Brahmans, made the latter lose their heaven. Self-love, gluttony and sordid vice triumphed. Having no love for the country in their own hearts, they failed to teach the people, who looked to them alone for light and leading as to what patriotism meant.

"Pay, pay, pay the Brahman and you have fulfilled all your obligations in this world and carved out a path for a better place in the next" was the teaching to the people, from whom all education had been [illegible] pressed, lest they should understand things [illegible] through the yoke of age-long bondage [illegible] superstition.

Does it not sound that the Bra[illegible] playing the part of God Almighty [illegible]

Eden, when He forbade Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of the Tree of knowledge of good and evil? And due to that alleged "divine command" what have not the Hebrew, the Mussulman, and the Christian worlds suffered? The Hebrew and the Mussulman are just as much kept in ignorance by their respective Churches as the Hindu.

As regards the Christians, can they be said to have obtained their emancipation from the thraldom of their Church? I should say, scarcely: though some rebels out of that Church have been holding aloft the light of science and truth for the real salvation of the world, which their Church has failed in giving. And this must be recorded to their credit.

As the modern policy of all civilised states is based on the principle of achieving commercial and material prosperity, so during the palmy days of Hindu-India, the state policy engineered by the Brahman was for achieving sacerdotal prosperity, at the sacrifice of every thing and all other elements in the social fabric.

The state policy to-day in British India being one of non-interference with the Hindu social-fabric, the greedy and wily Brahman priest is making hay while the sun shines by quietly exploiting the ignorant, superstition-ridden, poverty-stricken Hindu-humanity whom he is accustomed to regard as his special preserve by right divine.

Ye, Brahman Priests, the Lords spiritual of India—slaves of your own crystallised system as you are—I see your triumphant, nay indignant smile. But I tell you, that if you have any love for India, that smile would soon turn into tears and tears would dry up and red blood would ooze out of your eyes, if you would only have the goodness to compare the condition of the congregations of other churches in the world with the condition of your own continently vast congregation, whose forebears, generation after generation from the pre-historic times, have lived and died under the canopy of your church, receiving such intellectual and soul illumination as you have chosen

to give them, with unmurmuring, unquestioning fidelity and slavish faith, and you will be convinced of my charges against your system.

It is crushing out the very manhood and womanhood of your congregation and you do not see it. Your system sucks up the rich blood of the children of both sexes, preventing them from growing up from innocent childhood into robust, virile but equally innocent adolescence—the bright dawn of the spring in life—a stage of growth they do not know in the Hindu-world but which is the corner-stone on which the social-fabric of other civilised congregations in the world has been built.

Your young men do not meet your young women and they do not experience the first sprouting, in his or her bosom, of the green leaves of that God of Love which blesses every thing it touches.

In a country where the immortal Kalidas had lived and sung of that Maid Divine, weighted with the weight of that budding youth which steals upon one unconsciously—unnoticed even by herself at the mirror wending her way to that grotto to woo, to worship her Love, her Shiva, and of the loving glance she cast upon him to bring him back from his meditations and his lustless responsive look (burning to ashes Kama the God of Lust), Maids as divine are not given an opportunity in life to woo, to worship their Loves, their Shivas.

Long before the weight of budding youth unconsciously steals upon them, their dooms are sealed. Need I utter it—do you not know it—the shame and infamy of their deflowerment, ravishment, under the license of that "Sanatan Hindu marriage" which cannot be performed unless you, the Brahman Priest, preside over it? Must not the sin of it sap the very foundation of the society of which you are the custodian and trustee? Ye, Immortal Gods, is this the way this degenerate Brahman, in the name of religion, should be permitted to achieve our ruin? Is there nothing in heaven or hell to save [illegible] this intolerable degradation every day of our li[illegible]

Talk of "Maiden Tribute in Modern Babylon," in London! in Paris! in New York! Hundred times "No" I say. There, the "He" beast is more human and civilised, however rotten he may really be under the European and American standards of decency. I declare without fear, that that "Modern Babylon" is the Hindu-India of to-day, where Maidens are daily sacrificed under the veneer of religio-matrimonial sanction as rigidly cold and inhuman in its cruelty as it can possibly be conceived.

I knew a Hindu father of a Maid Divine: Poor child! She had congenital weakness of the heart. The father, a rich man and a vakeel, was cautioned by the best of doctors, that any sexual excitement would be fatal to the girl. But the importunities of his wife and mother were so severe to get the girl married before her puberty, as prescribed by our alleged Shastras (the fabricated and forged interpolations whereof are well-known but nevertheless doggedly adhered to as genuine), that he yielded and gave his daughter in marriage. I was invited but I did not go. The girl died in three months' time from the date of the marriage from the dilatation of the heart.

Such instances of premature death there are in plenty in every Hindu family. Whether the householder would have the moral strength to own up or not is another matter.

An evil like this cannot be remedied by a Royal commission or any legislative measure, but must be left to the dawning of that sense of decency and moral courage in the parents, in the presiding priests, and generally to the upward trend of liberalisation in the Hindu society, for which I fervently pray.

It strikes me that in this horrible business, the presiding priests and the parents of both the parties are like soulless spokes in the wheels of the car of Jagarnauth, which must automatically move on, crushing out the lives of our Maidens, yet no one being powerful or morally strong enough to stop the incalculable evil.

This moral cowardice on our part is surely a sign of our utter decadence for which we have to hang down our heads before the rest of the world.

And he who weds your "Maid Divine," may I not plead for him at your bar? He is also victimised. He being a boy and of the genus "Hunter," you should let him be a free hunter for a bit in his life. Whether he is married or not by his parents before his teens, his instinct of wooing a woman cannot be smothered. In him the thirst for winning a woman's love never ceases unless he goes through it, as measles or chicken-pox in childhood. Give him a chance to speak to maids of his own rank and let him innocently but desperately fall in love between his 17th and 21st year. He will be the better for all that.

The first maidenly kiss and nothing more, which he might win for himself as the result of all that desperateness, will in after years be to him the greatest prize of his life—oh! far greater than your "Premchand Raichand Scholarship" or the "Tagore-Law Medal." His angle of vision as regards things in general and the "woman eternal" would undergo a healthy and a manlier change. He would be able to perceive the purity deep-hidden in eternal womanhood, it having been faintly manifested to him in that maidenly kiss—his first kiss—which he had won for himself.

The thought of it would soothe him in his struggles in life, save him from many a tempting pitfall, danger and morbid pessimism. The caged bird's perpetual caresses can never be comparable with the moment's touch of a wild free bird, which trusting him had sat on his arm, and pouring out to him its soul's burden in song had flown away free and unpolluted by him. He would then have a far deeper appreciation and respect for his own manhood which he does not now possess. Now he is perpetually fighting between his natural pure instinct and what he is taught to shun, but which he being a woman-born cannot shun, namely offering his own free homage to womanhood in the abstract.

If he is permitted to do that, before his divine nature is matrimonially prostituted, he would be able to understand and appreciatingly assimilate as soul-food what he cannot do now, circumscribed and fettered as he is all round, his own Vaishnab poets (particularly the inspired songs of Chundi Das, full to overflowing with that lustless love of that divine pair Radha and Shri Krishna, which no literature in any country ancient or modern can be said to come up to their level in simplicity, depth, sweetness and grandeur) and his school Shakespeare and other English poets such as Shelley, Byron, Tennyson, Browning, and thus acquire for himself wider human sympathies and be in life a worthier son of India than what all his university degrees secured simply through cramming would make him.

To think that in wide India, young men and young women do not fall in love with each other (if at all, under the bondage of premature and undesired parenthood), or that in wide India there is no room for a young man to have the taste of his first virginal kiss, which will go surging through his veins and make him a man, is I declare abnormal and unnatural. It brings suffering and pessimism, making him in the morrow of his earning economic freedom vulnerable to the first wink of a bazar woman.

Everybody misses in India the wild exuberance of youthfulness in both the sexes. From childhood they are ushered into automatic and undesired parenthood much too prematurely. Such prematurely born children are not only deficient in physical strength, but in those manly and womanly virtues necessary as well for the sustenance and preservation as for the up-keep of the dignity of the Nation. No wonder Europeans call us degenerates.

To the priestly Brahmans must be ascribed the downfall and decay of the Hindus as a nation. Politically, socially, morally and spiritually, we have become effete. We have ceased to think, to analyse and compare. Our own system and method have poisoned our blood, blinded

our eye-sight, so that to-day we cannot see the real world nor judge as to how the other civilised races regard us.

Are we to be kept out of our natural heritage of receiving proper education, of seeing the world and comparing other human institutions with our own, because of the rigour of the caste system, because of your " Mayabad " that the world is a delusion?

In Hindu-India of to-day we are done to death by " Isms," *viz.*, Brahmanism, Buddhism, Jainism, Vedantism, Brahmoism, Bhakti-ism, Arya-somajism, Sikhism, Shaiva-ism, Shaktaism, Vaishnavism, Tantrikism, Karta-vajaism, and how many more there are for our eternal confusion I know not.

Did the Brahman Guru ever teach us that so many " Isms " could only have the effect of cutting up the body politic into so many awkward and antagonistic ways that it would not be possible to achieve harmony?

Indian history is full of the bitter and bloody fights between some of those respective " Isms " for achieving mastery; but what does the Brahman, the priest say? He is in most of them and gets his Dakshina or Bakshis besides fees and dues and in delight says, " so many more roads now for going to Heaven than was formerly: all streams lead to the same ocean. God is merciful."

At Benares once, a Brahman priest who had been listening to lectures in support of Hindu widow-remarriage, asked me in a frightened voice, " Sir, if all the Hindu widows got married, how should we make our living?" My answer to him need not be mentioned here. I asked a house agent as to what he liked most. He frankly said that he would like everybody to go on changing and changing his house. Lawyers too I have no doubt would like everybody to go to law reasonably or unreasonably. Doctors too would likewise prefer epidemics to be raging always. The selfishness of these parasitic sections of society may sound as a joke.

But it is more than a joke that a nation should be eternally left to the merciless exploitation of the Brahman

priest. There must be some rationality, some sanity left in men and women born even in a sacerdotal state like Hindu-India, to save themselves from perpetrating social wrongs, which do not become the less in gravity because of the sugar-coating of religiosity put upon them by the Brahman priest.

He is shrewd and astute enough to be able to drown you with quotations of texts from Manu, Yajnavalkya and Raghunandan by way of "Authority," pretending thereby to throw the responsibility in the matter on higher heads than his own. He plainly says that he, poor man, is only the minister for serving the Hindu society as laid down in those ancient and Sacred Texts, which are obligatory and binding on every Hindu wishing to remain in the Hindu-fold, but if anybody wants to be free from the fetters of those texts or the Brahman minister, let him get out of the Hindu-fold.

The above attitude on the part of the Brahman priest, the people's Guru, is as mischievous as it is absurd. For it has the effect of at once making the Hindus "text-bound" for all time and subservient to the Brahman priest, who to maintain his own superiority cannot allow the genuineness of these Texts to be enquired into.

Modern research however permits us to get to the historic origin and motive of those much vaunted "texts" the genuineness whereof we are certainly in a position to impeach. It has now been clearly established that our Briddha Manu or the old Manu has been made to disappear and the present Manu, so redolent of Brahmanic superiority, has been redacted, recasted and re-edited several times to suit the Brahman's interest at a late post-Buddhistic age, as and when Hindu revivals took place from time to time in the wake of the numerous Brahmanic and pro-Brahmanic Kingdoms which came into existence.

Not only Manu but all our Shastric literature has been put through the same process for the purpose of re-creating a new Earth in accordance with the Brahmanic pretensions, after the Buddhistic deluge. In the necessity

of doing so, the history of the past had to be garbled, abandoning all sense of proportion and falsifying or ignoring the sequence of time, circumstances and contemporaneous events.

These redactions began to appear in the form of Commentaries. One of the famous Commentaries of Manu is that of Medhatithi whose voluminous 'Manu-Vasya' was composed in the 9th century A.D. (the very first Islamic inroad having occurred in the middle of the first quarter of the 8th century A.D.) Even this Vasya came to be "restored" by the Court Pandits of King Madan Pala of Digh in the 15th century A.D.

In the same 15th century you also get in Bengal both the famous Brahmanic Smriti-writer Raghunandan and his contemporary the Great Sri Chaitanya, the father of the Caste-abolishing, anti-Brahmanic Vaishnab cult which had flooded the country for two centuries.

Upon the decline of the Mussulman rule in Bengal after the battle of Plassey in 1757, the so-called Raghunandan's Smriti began to peep its head out of the archives of the then Brahman Rajah of Nadia with the co-operation of the learned Brahman Pandits of Navadwip within his jurisdiction. It is now the Brahmanic "Code Ritual" and "Code Social" of Bengal which was originally a casteless Buddhist province and later became a casteless Vaishnab country.

As regards Yajna Valkya Smriti, it may be affirmed that it is not the work of that ancient Vedic Rishi but by some nameless alleged pupil of his belonging to a school of the white Yajurveda, and as such familiar with the Grihya Sutras of Parashara and Manu and Shraddha-Sutras of Katyana. This Smriti too went through several redactions.

The Hindu-world cannot, I submit, be kept "text" bound for all time, apart from the question whether Shastric texts are genuine or otherwise, but that we, as free citizens of that Hindu-world and not as slaves of the Brahman priests, should be permitted to use our con-

science and discretion as to whether certain "Texts" should be enforcible in our own homes or not. Further, user or non-user of "Texts" as the basis of conduct, should not be a factor in determining whether one was a Hindu or not.

By bigottedly adhering to his "Texts," the Brahman priest, wholly blind as to the future catastrophe in store for him, is allowing keaps and heaps of people to get out of the Hindu-fold and thereby permitting race-suicide to be effected.

In this connection, please think of the loss to the Hindu-world by the conversion of the Hindus to the Islamic and Christian faiths. Had the Brahman priest retained the catholicity of spirit of his ancestors who converted the whole of India into Brahmanism, not only the Buddhistic revolt but these later disruptions might have been avoided.

The Hindu-world, depleted as it is, must for the sake of its own future life dethrone the Brahman priest from the Guruship of the Race and break down the rigid walls of the Caste-system and reframe its "marriage-code" and "code-social" in the light of the civilisation of the day. This social re-adjustment and putting our own house in order, would show that we are still a living race and not mere mummies in the museum with scriptural "Texts" stamped on our foreheads.

From the degenerate Brahmans and their "Texts" let us go to our great Epics.

You know how sacred the Ramayan and the Mahabharat are in the eyes of our people, who believe that the former was written as a prophetic book long before Ram was born. To them Ram is an ideal Aryan hero. Nay, he is more than that. He is the Avatar or incarnation of Vishnu, one of the Great Gods of the Hindu-Trinity. He is held out to be the personification of selflessness who, to help his father to keep his promise to his step-mother, went to the wilderness for 14 years.

Hindu fathers, to teach dutifulness to their sons, make them read the Ramayan, and they soon learn all about Ram, Sita and Lakshman.

The picture that indelibly remains impressed on those dutiful sons' minds, is that Ram, on the slightest breath of false suspicion reaching him from his people at Ajodhyá, that Sita had not been left pure during her incarceration in Lanka (a matter regarding the untruthful nature of which he was fully satisfied upon examining Sita by fire), turned her out into the jungles, knowing she was soon going to be the mother of his own children, and that though suffering agonies in his own mind for the lost love of Sita, he nevertheless inflicted that blow upon himself of separation from Sita, to gratify the caprice of his own people, without hesitation.

Do you think what the divine Ram did, those dutiful Hindu sons would fail to do to their own child-Sitas? Not they. Many a child-Sita has died weeping in India in the past, and there are not a few child-Sitas weeping in India to-day, let me assure you, in consequence of the unfounded suspicions of the mothers-in-law or the sisters-in-law, who for the nonce become the whispering people of Ajodhya hardening the hearts of our modern Rams.

Due to this inhuman portraiture in the Ramayan of the character of the divine Ram, many and many a domestic tragedy has taken place in India and innocent child-wives have been sacrificed to the wolves.

From such pictures in their sacred books is home-life in Hindu-India *fashioned to this day.* The fault lies [illegible] with the religious-minded and ideal-worshipping [illegible] so much, who adhere to what they are taught, as [illegible] Brahman writer who painted Ram's character [illegible] Ramayan, which has also gone through the [illegible] daction several times as suitable occasions [illegible]

Our present-day Ramayan is certa[illegible]
'Valmiki,' and scholars think that 'U[illegible]

we now have it, is an interpolation put in there to serve some ulterior purpose. And what that purpose was we shall presently see.

As regards poor Sita (Sita Mai or Mother Sita as she is to all Hindus), could not the portrait painter in the 'Uttar Ram Charit' have abstained from raising the old wind—*re* her chastity—which had been laid low by the fire-trial? It was re-opened for the purpose of impressing the womanhood of the country as to how much she was likely to suffer by way of punishment from her husband even if a breath of suspicion were raised against her character. Like Cæsar's wife she must always be above suspicion.

By this didactic picture Sita Mai is left unsullied and untouched. She shines on as an embodiment of womanly virtue for ever. But for all time, the whole manhood of India has been lowered in the person of that ideal and divine Ram.

Would it not have been more in keeping with the self-sacrificing character of Ram, when the public suspicion regarding his wife's character reached him, that he should call his people together and tell them that:—"if they desired Sita not to sit on the same throne with him, because they had suspicions about her, then in that case it was his stern duty to hand over the kingdom to his brother Bharat and leave them for ever with Sita whom he knew to be virtuous; that Sita was his married wife who would soon be a mother; that he would be acting inhumanly if he should forsake her; that if he was their king, he was Sita's king also; that if she asked that justice should be done to her, could he as her king deny that to her? For then indeed he would be unworthy of being a man and a king."

Do you not think with me, that this attitude on Ram's part, had it been so painted in the Ramayan, would have made Ram really the Ideal hero of our country?

Lakshman is extolled because he cut off the nose of Surpanakha, Ravan's sister, for the cheek on her part in

trying to flirt with him. This picture too has its baneful effect upon the character of our young men. Lakshman might have behaved a little more kindly, chivalrously, with that lady. I suppose our manly virtue of cutting off women's noses or otherwise disfiguring them dates from such a remote period.

Not only that, but various forms of cruelty that are inflicted on our women by our men are due to the picture of those two ideal brothers Ram and Lakshman. The latter was at the end of the chapter directed not to show himself before Ram by way of punishment, because without knowing that Ram was engaged in conference with a stranger, Lakshman had disturbed him with some important state matter which brooked no delay.

Lifelong brotherly love and devotion which Lakshman had poured out ungrudgingly at Ram's feet perished at a moment's misunderstanding. That is also a sacred example, which is being well followed in our society by the innumerable partition suits of ancestral homesteads which are annually filed in the High Court and in the Mofussil Courts.

Brothers have become more litigious, more intolerant of each other than they were formerly. In such cases also, the Courts have to sift the evidence because of the coating of untruthfulness with which they are as a rule presented. Surely the university degrees which are being conferred on our young men since the year 1858 have not in any way elevated their character or enhanced the love of truth in them, and at all hands one is confronted with the charge that our character as a race has undergone a material change for the worse.

In bygone days Chinese and Greek travellers had given us generous certificates for truthfulness, honesty in dealings and credit for keeping our word of honour if once given. In all those respects there has been a noticeable deterioration which they all ascribe to the university education which our young men are receiving.

Bringing forward false witnesses in every case almost, be it civil or criminal, and attempts to support such cases by means of fabricated books of account and other forged documents have become characteristic of our people, once pure and noble, and this we cannot but record in sorrow and shame.

Burning young wives, by tying them up in their cotton saries soaked in kerosene oil, has become one of the newest and neatest methods of getting rid of them for the sake of their gold ornaments and other presents received by them on the occasion of their marriage. The rumour of suicide is assiduously spread to avoid the Police. This wife-killing process repeated three times, leaves the mourning crocodiles, namely, "The Husband, Pa and Ma-in-law & Co. Ltd.", like the market-price-bewailing "third-time" insolvent traders, very much better off.

It is a common-place knowledge of lawyers in this country that "sonless-widowed-sisters" and "sonless-sisters-in-law" are invariably exploited by their respective brothers and brothers-in-law for their money.

I suppose it must be a natural law that the 'Unscrupulous-Brainy' must feed upon the 'Brainless-rich, subject of course to honourable exceptions. And roughly, all our educated men may be placed under the first category and all our 'Pardanashin Women' under the second category, the latter class being in temperament all that is selfless, noble, pure and sweet, but uneducated, unreasoning and conservative to a breaking point.

It may be conceded that it is due to the first set of qualities above mentioned in our women, that Hindu-India is still a going concern.

All the pride we still may feel for our culture is due to the saintly virtues of our women. When the question is one of race and culture it is the women who count and not men.

Unfortunately in this wicked world, even too much selflessness, saintliness and sweetness in our women, do cast their shadows or evil effects on the men-folks of our race. Those angelic qualities in our women have made our men, selfish, softish and effeminate.

Our joint-family system of household has no doubt developed the angelic qualities in our women. There, their rule is supreme and must be obeyed. Their loving devotion to the household is something unique, which one would not find in any other country in the world.

To be able to appreciate the loving devotion and service of the mistress or Grihini of a Hindu joint-family household one must see her at work.

She is great in domestic economics and accounts, though illiterate and without attending any course of lectures in any polytechnics.

Her eyes are everywhere and upon everything, from the cleansing of the brass and bell-metal utensils, sweeping and washing of the rooms, doors and steps, seeing to the boiling and distribution of milk, regulating the family breakfast according to the day's fish supply and allocating in the hands of her cook the necessary stores and vegetables for the regular meals, chopping of vegetables, down to the bathing, dressing and feeding of the kids and brats, the school and college-going sons, nephews and office-going husband, brothers-in-law and not infrequently a domesticated son-in-law also. All that she gets through by 10 A.M.

After the school, college and office people have gone out by 10-30 A.M., and there is comparative quiet, she sees to the light-breakfast of the servants and to the preparation of luncheons that have to be made and sent out to the above-mentioned school, college and office people, as also to the substantial or semi-substantial meal which they would require immediately on coming home, some at 4 P.M., others at 4-30 P.M. and 5 P.M.

This takes up the lady's time till 12 noon, when the luncheons are despatched upon the servants being fed their midday meal. Then there is conference with her cook as to the dinner at night and probably the store-room has to be opened again and things given out. In between, she has to decide quarrels between the servants or listen to their tales of woe from their village-homes. It is never before 1 P.M. that she is free to have her own ablutions and prayers. She is hardly ever ready for her own breakfast before 2 P.M.

You may be certain that no beggars would go away from her house without getting some food or copper, nor would any cook or servant of hers succeed in stealing a spoonful of milk or an ounce of coal or oil or food-stuffs or vegetable without her knowing it.

She has probably one hour between 3 and 4 P.M. to call her own, and this time she probably employs in sewing or darning.

Again from 4 P.M., as the boys from schools and colleges begin to return, feeding goes on, and it never ends till much before midnight. Then after seeing to the night-meal of the servants, the lady herself has some light dinner and retires. You may be sure also that her own husband in the meantime has returned, been fed, attended to and comfortably put to bed with Pan and Chillim and appropriate lectures on his duties as a man and a father of children.

The Hindu household as regards its meals is very much like a restaurant where, so long as the place is open, a member can always drop in at any time and get whatever is available.

The male members of a Hindu household who are punctual enough as regards their morning meals on week days are most unpunctual as regards their evening meals. They do not all eat together or at the same time any of their daily meals. Each individual has to be separately served and attended to whenever he is ready for his meals.

The men are not considerate enough as regards the extra fagging their irregularities impose upon the lady of the house.

I have perhaps gone a little out of my way to draw your attention to this domestic aspect of a joint-family household which, apart from reducing our women to mere drudges, leaves no time in their hands for thinking purposes or of being in touch with the changing and growing mentality of their own husbands and boys, particularly the latter.

The boys after a couple of years of school life find out that their mothers are illiterate persons and cannot explain their daily lessons to them and they begin to get out of hand and treat their mothers with a degree of intellectual contempt. The result is, that notwithstanding all the angelic qualities in their mothers, the boys grow up, no doubt fed and fattened by the best of ghee, milk, fish and goat's meat, but wholly untouched, uninfluenced by the spirituality of their mothers' nature.

This secret contempt of our boys for their mothers' illiteracy tinctures their whole angle of vision as regards the women of their country, and very early they begin to show a contemptuous attitude towards women in general and their intelligence.

The mothers not being educated do not venture to say anything to their intellect-budding sons, who thus grow up intellectually away from them. The fathers are too busy in earning money to pay any heed to what the sons may be thinking about or what their intellectual outlook on life is. An aloofness is soon visible between the fathers and sons, the latter being afraid to approach the former.

In the Baitakhanas or the male-reception-rooms of the house, the fathers and their boon companions perhaps talk loosely on such subjects as women and sex. And the boys who are always there swallow those things and become precocious long before their teens.

The boys scarcely see their fathers and mothers happily reading a book together, or discussing a good subject together, or praying together. Quarrels and squabbles of the parents the boys would hear, and probably also the fathers' contemptuous references to the mothers' muddle-headedness and want of common sense. Precociousness they further learn from young married girls, probably cousins of the same age as themselves, and from their college-going and Reynolds-reading husbands.

The point I want to make of all this is that in the bosom of the joint-family households our boys grow up without a proper "home life," which cannot but be detrimental to them.

Surely it is the mother who makes the "home" for the boys and not the father, however much he may earn to keep up that "home."

It is the lack of mother's influence on the character of the boys at that impressive age which is most to be regretted.

In the confusion of too much formal (therefore soulless and therefore unthinkingly, unintentionally hypocritical) religiosity in Hindu households, nay in the whole of Hindu society, the cardinal principle of conduct, namely, to do as you would be done by as between one brother and another, between man and man in commercial and other transactions, is flagrantly omitted to be observed.

The pecuniary success of the "unscrupulous Brainy" is emulated by a large section of the "greedy" and the "needy" to whom education, instead of being a step to higher things, is but a sharp razor for cutting throats of people with, metaphorically, for swindling people in such a way as not to come within the purview of the criminal courts.

The want of proper home life and influence on our boys and men and the low consequent moral standard which at present obtains in Hindu society, must go on deteriorating our race still further, until the sacredness of

the mother's spiritual influence at home and not her mere drudgery is appreciated, restored and made effective by making her stronger by giving her the implements of ordinary education. You will see then how her broom-stick would work.

At present that deterioration is further augmented by the inherent conflict of *ideas* and *ideals* in our diverse Isms and Sects. Take for instance the 'Avatar' Cult of the Vaishnabites. It is unnecessary, unreasonable and admitted to be wholly absurd by such learned savants as the late Dayanund Sharaswati.

The Vaishnabites to push on their Avatar Cult had no hesitation in stooping at anything. In trying to harmonise the lofty spiritual abstraction of Vedantism with something concrete for worshipping through Bhakti or Love, the Vaishnabites have overshot their mark and made Vishnu, one of the Gods of the Hindu Trinity, to incarnate in various forms from age to age.

To believe in them, as depicted in one of our Great Bibles, the "Srimad-Bhagabat," is lowering to our intellect as men and women. But it is marvellous what the learned author or authors of that great work thought of the psychology of the race for whose alleged benefit or stultification he or they took so much pains. The principle underlying this great work is simple enough for a child to understand, namely, that God is Love.

In the Mahabharat, Shrikrishna, the hero of the Vaishnab Cult, is a diplomatic character. He was a near relative of both the parties in the great war. In his heart of hearts he wanted the war. His lecture to wavering Arjuna before the battle array, as depicted in the "Bhagabat-Gita," another of our Great Bibles, was to slay on, believing himself to be but an instrument of God, and that in the matter of the slaughter he, Arjuna, had no choice or discretion, as the enemy hosts which had to be outwardly or objectively slain, were already slain subjectively in the eyes of God.

To be in Arjuna's frame of mind, as taught by Shrikrishna, is to be 'Nishkam,' and to do what he did in a selfless spirit and as the instrument of God is to perform 'Nishkam Dharma,' the underlying principle being that God is Relentless Justice—the mighty Avenger of wrongs, which are righted in His own processes of Evolution, independently of man's scheming, for man with his petty vanities is as nothing to Him.

The doctrine of nothingness of man, save and except that he is an instrument, a vessel of God, which underlies the 'Nishkam Dharma' of the 'Bhagabat-Gita' is far more stern, ennobling and befitting the psychology of the race than the maudlin sentimentality with which the simple doctrine of "God is Love" has been super-sugar-coated in 'Srimad-Bhagabat.'

To be able to understand our racial psychology and its inconsistencies, it is necessary to understand these two great Bibles of ours. It is from this point of view, that is to say, of the effect of these two Bibles on our character, that I have deemed it necessary to touch upon them.

Shrikrishna's colleagues in the scheming for the great war were Kunti and Draupadi, the mother and the wife of the Pandavas.

Almost all the ruling Kshatriya Kings having perished in that war, India was bereft of that power whereby the country was being protected from foreign inroads in those days. It brought on momentous changes, and India was ushered into a cycle of decay and degeneracy unparalleled in the annals of the world.

From this decay and degeneracy Buddhism and Jainism tried in vain to save India, and while Brahmanism triumphed by sheer brute force, India languished and sank. And to-day India is that cold corpse for which Brahmanism is wholly and solely responsible.

Let us, however, for a little while go back to Shrikrishna, the most favourite of man-gods of Hindu-India of to-day. While he was acting as the charioteer of

Arjuna, before the onslaught of the great war commenced, he is alleged to have given utterance to the abovementioned 'Bhagabat-Gita' which has been embodied in the Mahabharat.

But if that great book 'Bhagabat-Gita,' which tries to preach the 'Nishkam Dharma' harmonising the different 'Yoga' systems, were torn out of the Mahabharat, it would not lose its own glory or in any way spoil the merits of the Mahabharat itself. By the mere alleged utterance of the Gita on the part of Shrikrishna he should not have been classed as an 'Avatar' of Vishnu.

The Vaishnabites, unlike their rivals—the Shaibyas or the Shaktas—have been playing upon the credulity of the ignorant masses of this country too much, by expressly teaching from their 'Srimad-Bhagabat' that the Gay Lothario of Brindaban was the hero Shrikrishna of the Mahabharat and that he was the God incarnate. Not a word of Shrikrishna's 'Brindaban life' is to be found in the Mahabharat.

Playing about too much with Godheads has the tendency of making one less a man and bereft of judgment and sense of proportion in things.

Under our sacerdotal system, too much desire for the good things of the other world, at the sacrifice of what we have in hand, namely, our present life, must spell failure and ruin for the whole nation. It must stultify our intellect and sap our manhood. It is a kind of auto-intoxication in which we as a nation are living and our awakening becomes the more difficult as the stupefying poisonous gas springs from within us.

Now in connection with our sacred epics, may I draw your attention to some points, on which a considerable portion of our superstitious nature, particularly that of our women, has been founded?

Put to yourself these questions:—

(1). In the case of Ravan, the great king of Lanka, (being as he was the representative and hero of a rival

civilisation which had to be overcome, *fas et nefas*, and brought under the heel of the Vedic-Aryans, much in the same way as the Greeks had to destroy the Trojan civilisation and the Romans had to destroy the Phœnician civilisation of Carthage), why was it necessary that He, Ravan, should be painted as the worshipper of Shiva?

(2). Why was it necessary for Ram, as he was the incarnation of the Godhead Vishnu, to secure by deception and subterfuge through the aid of Hanuman, the favourite weapons of self-defence of Ravan from his queen Mandodari?

(3). Why should Lakshman murder Indrajit, Ravan's last surviving son and general, while in the act of worshipping the Aryan God of Fire?

(4). Why above all would Ram perform Durga Puja or Shakti Puja, as he is said to have done in the spring, for the success of his arms?

Does it not strike you with reference to those Pujas that the whole of the Ramayan had been edited by a Shakta worshipper to advertise, for the sake of his own propagandist work, his particular form of worship? Ram, the Vishnu incarnate, worships the Shakti whereby a powerful Shaibya, Ravan, is overcome. Therefore Shakti is superior to Vishnu and Vishnu superior to Shiva. And it follows that the Shakti worshippers stand at a more advantageous position than other worshippers. Could all that have been achieved without the facile pen and imaginative mind of a Shakta Editor? Such is rivalry in sectarianism!

And such sectarianism was the politics in Ancient India. To-day we carry the spirit of those days in outcasting a 'Kalapani-returned' brother. Our villages are hotbeds of such outcasting where a group of liberal men, usually the Sudra-rich, is for not-outcasting. Against that liberal group stands the proverbially conservative Brahman and Vaishya groups (we have no Kshatriyas

now) for outcasting. Our socio-religious development has been on sectarian or party lines. He who says we are unfit for party politics does not know us at all.

It is well known that before the Vaishnab cult came in, there used to be the 'Indra' cult throughout India, which was replaced by the Vaishnab cult.

All of you have heard of the caves of Ellora, its whole hillside hollowed out and converted into halls of such magnitude and replenished with the Gods and Goddesses of the Hindu pantheon carved out of solid rocks in such magnificence of scale, proportion and beauty, that British critics have remarked that there is nothing in the whole world to equal them; that they surpass anything that Egypt has given to the world, not excepting its Pyramids; and that they are inferior to nothing in the statuary line which has yet been found by excavation in Greece. There is a hall there dedicated to Indra and his satellites, but nothing of Shrikrishna or Vishnu do you see there.

In the Mahabharat, if Shrikrishna was the 'Avatar' of Vishnu, was it not possible for him to have displayed his Godhead tricks equally to Duryodhan, as to Arjuna and others, by showing the inside of his mouth in the cavity of which Arjuna saw the whole universe revolving? If he had done that, his divine powers would have at once commanded the obedience of all, and the devastating war should have stopped at once.

Shrikrishna, it is alleged, conceived of the idea of creating the "Mahabharat" (not the epic of that name but meaning literally the "Greater India"), and yet his being a partisan in the devastating internecine war—not for the vindication of any high principle, but for carving out a kingdom for and the gratification of the honour of 'Yudhisthira and brothers,' a branch of the same reigning family, and in which all the combined kingly or Kshatriya Power in the land perished—does seem contradictory, affording proof positive that even Shr

to commit mistakes in policy as any other human diplomat. We lose nothing by properly estimating our heroes or by keeping them to their human pedestal.

You remember the great scene in Duryodhan's Court when Queen Draupadi was dragged out and grossly insulted. It is alleged, that she afterwards confessed that it was her deep and silent meditation of Shrikrishna, in the course of the insult, that increased the folds of her sari to such an extent, that no amount of forcible dragging and unfolding on the part of Duryodhan's brother, was successful in denuding her.

If Shrikrishna's divine interference in that connection had come to the knowledge of Duryodhan, then arrogant as Duryodhan was, he would not have been so arrogant as to defy the Godhead in submitting to his terms of making peace with the Pandavas.

As for the infamy and shame of that disgraceful conduct towards Draupadi, the woman, by the then Imperial Court of India, be it said to the eternal glory of those of our Rishis who were in that august assembly, that they quitted it in disgust, cursing, that for that insult to a woman, the sceptre and crown to Rule India should be forever taken away from the Kshatriya Kings in the country.

The Rishis who had done that,—were they not fully convinced that degeneracy and decay had reached their utmost limits in India and that the ship of state must sink? And so it sank by stages to completely disappear from view, save and except for the rise of the Buddhistic Power in the person of Emperor Chandra Gupta Mauriya and the continuance thereof in the hands of his grandson Emperor Asoka and his descendants for some centuries. But those monarchs were not pure Kshatriyas at all as they had a very strong element of Sudra blood in them.

King Yudhisthira after the great war, in which had died millions upon millions of soldiers, recruited from the civil population of all classes, could not consolidate

the Empire even after the Raj-Shua-Yajna which he performed. The expenses thereof he was unable to meet nor the other state expenses. He had actually, so the story runs, to go to the Himalayas and dig for some alleged buried treasure-trove of a bygone king which he had heard of. The country and the royal treasury were so depleted of men and money.

King Yudhisthira retired into the mountains and perished, as did the other Pandavas. Shrikrishna, his kingdom at Dwarka and his people the Jadavas had all perished. Parikshit and Janmejoy, the son and grandson of Arjuna, died prematurely, reigning only for a few years, and the ship of state was left without a man worthy to be at the helm and without any military organisation.

Naturally there was chaos in the country. Most of the allied kingdoms which had participated in the Great War, backing either the Kurus or the Pandàvas as the case might be, were also left without their ruling kings or their descendants to succeed them. Such kingdoms as had a descendant of the old king left, retained their kingly form of government. In those that had none left, as was in the generality of cases, some rude form of peoples' government came to be established. But all these petty governments, either headed by a king or without, were exceedingly feeble for the utter want of military organisation.

These circumstances, namely, the complete disappearance of the controlling central power, the feebleness in all those petty governments and the collapse of the military, gave a tremendous impetus to the surviving civil population to organise themselves for their own safety and protection. This led to the growth of civic institutions in India to which I shall presently refer, as these had a very far-reaching effect in shaping the character of the people.

Before dealing however with the growth of those institutions, it is worth while noticing that in the Mahabharat War there fought side by side Brahman battalions,

Mlechcha battalions, as also Javana battalions; and that to all of them the same sort of meat-diet was supplied from the Pandava side and that in those days there had not come into existence the proverb "Eight Brahmans nine Kitchens."

Let me further remark, in passing, that at the present time there are nearly 2,000 Brahman castes. Rai Bahadur Lala Biajnath's little book on "Hinduism ancient and modern" would tell you that there are 469 sects of Saraswat Brahmans in the Punjab alone, Kshatriyas 590 sects, Vaisyas and Sudras are divided into even more. I have not had the time to enquire into such details regarding Bengal, Bombay, Madras, or the United Provinces for which we need not regret. You may be sure the number of these divisions would exceed the number of the stars in heaven.

You find further in the Mahabharat, that in those days they married whosoever they liked, that the caste system had not developed any rigour about it (except in the case of the Sudra), that beef and pork were not forbidden food: nor was there any prohibition as regards drinking soma juice. Further there was no purdah system for women either during that period or the earlier Ramayan period.

The growth of our civic institutions, to which I am about to refer, brought on vast changes in our social system during those long dark centuries which intervened between the Mahabharat War and the advent of Buddhism. I may refer to that intervening period as the dark ages of India, when along with other changes the position of women and Sudras were materially affected. We note the inevitable increase in the Brahmanic sway, the rigidity of the caste system, the curtailment of women's freedom, and the reduction of the position of the Sudras to that of mere serfs.

The advent of Buddhism was the dawn of the Golden age for India in every respect. It gave freedom to women

and emancipated the Sudras who had been victimised by the rigour of the caste system.

The purdah system, to my mind, came into existence and vogue with the revival of Hinduism, on the ashes of the last and decadent phase of the post-Buddhistic age. The Hindu society had reached then a stage in its vices and indecencies that had become repulsive to the better minds of the people. And it became a necessity to separate the women from the men, who could not be trusted as regards their behaviour to the gentler sex. Living under the same roof, daughters-in-law came to be forbidden to unveil themselves before their fathers-in-law and other elders to her own husband.

One of the causes of the downfall of the Hindus is that their society had to pass through that frightfully erotic and vulgar stage. The Mohamedan rule which ensued, failed to restore confidence in the people that their women were safe, and hence the purdah system continued and became a custom amongst the well-to-do. The Mohamedan rule rather gave an impetus to its stability and it is continuing with us to this day, though the necessity thereof no longer exists.

On the question of the origin of the Purdah system, I have to admit that the late eminent Pandit Rajendra Chandra Shastri differs from me. He thinks that the system of *Abarodh* or Purdah has been in existence since the Vedic and the Ramayan times. In support of his arguments he narrates an incident from the Ramayan, when upon the death of Ravana, Sita was sent for by Ram publicly to join him on foot from her place of imprisonment. But to Ram's disgust she insisted upon being taken to him in a palki, thereby showing that she had not forgotten the custom of not appearing in public without cover. The learned Pandit also refers to various stories of women witnessing triumphant processions from nooks and corners of houses, as are to be found in the Sanskrit literature.

With great deference to the learned Pandit, I submit that his conclusions do not naturally follow from the facts stated by him. It may be that Sita felt too weak, too nervous to walk or that she had a sore foot at the time, which made her insist upon a palki being brought for her, notwithstanding Ram's orders to the contrary. As regards the learned Pandit's references to stories from the Sanskrit literature, it should be carefully borne in mind, that those came to be written principally at a post-Buddhistic period. It is well known that the Manu, the Ramayan and the Mahabharat were all re-written and edited at least twice during Hindu revivals when the last phase of the post-Buddhistic decadence had fully set in.

Now let me tell you a little about the growth of our Civic Institutions, which will to a certain extent enlighten you as to how we as a people have been evolving for a thousand years between the Great War and Alexander's invasion.

The direct result of the destruction of the Kings in the country together with their respective military forces due to the great war was this, that throughout the country the peoples themselves in villages and towns grouped themselves together in the form of guilds or small corporations, primarily for their safety from robbers.

So you get at once the village and the town police as well as the village and the town militia tied together respectively as corporate bodies. Following their suit, all the important and unimportant branches of trade and industry including agriculture framed themselves into respective guilds for ensuring safety in their particular branch of business. Times were hard. One man could not be trusted, but a whole village full of men carrying on the same joint business for their mutual benefit could be trusted. Suppose you had gold and you wanted the gold made into ornaments. To trust one man with the gold would be risky, but the village or town corporation of goldsmiths was safe in all conscience.

The benefits of a corporate body came to be shared by all its members. Lands came to be held, tilled, sown and harvested on the corporate basis. In fact the joint-family system that prevails in India is due to that. At a time when the corporate spirit came in and pervaded the whole of the Indian social fabric it was most beneficial. Then it was an imperative necessity that drove the people into it.

It did not matter whether a weak, inefficient or a strong king ruled over a province or whether there was no king at all. The marked feature was the spirit of corporation amongst the masses in all fields of activity in ancient India and it was manifest in domestic, social, religious, political and economic life of the people.

In the universal new formations or re-groupings of the peoples, the Brahmans, as representing the religious and legal side of the body politic, could not but fall into line with the new re-groupings and get themselves incorporated in the same manner as the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas.

All these diverse corporations came to be governed by their own respective rules and regulations rudely devised on the basis of mutual benefit to their own respective members, such rules and regulations becoming, at a later age, usage and custom of a particular corporation.

Though there ensued a tremendous life amongst the peoples, in so far as they organised themselves, each of those corporations, however, became water-tight as against the rest, since a man could not belong to two corporations at the same time.

Hence each corporation became self-contained and rigid in discharging its own duties and securing its own living. Its rights and privileges and benefits and funds went to enrich the households of the men belonging to that particular corporation. The idea of a "Vested" interest in that particular corporation was the next step in the evolutionary process, and in the next you have it that

the sons either shared the benefits along with their father equally or that the sons succeeded to the benefits, which used to be enjoyed by their deceased father, in equal shares.

The corporate system was of great benefit to the Brahmans as a class. Education and learning and priest-craft being their speciality, they were always intellectual and subtle. Under the corporate system they became an organised body imparting an intellectual force which had to be reckoned with by the kings and the peoples.

They, the Brahmans, became the shining ones like the heavenly constellations, the Devatas. Their sons and grandsons and great-grandsons succeeding them being assured by the common law of the land, which evolved itself in India as above mentioned, and there being hardly any kingly power to control or counterbalance their influence, theirs was the leading position in everything in society as if by "Right divine."

In the Mahabharat you do not find any boastfulness of the "Brahman Cult." You notice that the Brahman Dronacharya was the Military Guru of the Princes, and his son by his merit was a great Rishi, as also a wielder of arms.

Priests and princes in India had always worked very well together so long as the question at issue did not touch their own rival claims as against one another.

When it did, as it did during the Buddhistic period to which I shall presently refer, that harmony was broken.

To the Brahmans, their high position, by universal sanction of society as then framed, became a monopoly which lent itself to unscrupulous exactions and to the encouragement of the grossest superstitions on which they felt their superiority mainly reposed. Hence they as a class never troubled themselves to give the peoples of the other corporations (namely, the Kshatriyas and the Vaisyas, who must all be regarded as in their spiritual charge) any other kind of education save and except that

of a religio-superstitious character, calculated to stultify their intellect and keep them in awe and bondage.

The individual ownership in lands and industries and trades having disappeared under the corporate system, the Sudras in groups of families had to get themselves affiliated to the various corporations for their livelihood, and their position was no better than that of slaves.

The Brahmans became the propounders of the Shakti cult and of the Tantras and Mantras as short cuts to success and prosperity in the ordinary daily affairs. The idea, that everything could be achieved by magical powers and influences of substances under magical spells and charms, grew apace and pervaded the life of the women. "Love potions" for the wayward lover and "poisonous drugs" for the enemy and their counteracting substances and influences were next discovered and developed. Sorcery and black magic, in short, played the devil with society.

The Brahmans ceased to live up to the high ideal of Aryan simplicity and purity. Altruism which had been all along the guiding principle of Brahmanism yielded to the temptations of lust, power and pelf, and they became selfish and sordid.

For their own aggrandisement, they exploited the ignorant masses who were left a prey to their villainy. It became quite the recognised custom, that after attaining puberty a bride's first-night should be devoted to the Brahman priest. He thus became the licensed lecher of society which at last revolted, resulting in the birth and rise of Buddhism in India. But this very important chapter of our national life has, through the machinations of the Brahman theologians, priests and itihasists or chroniclers, been greatly obscured from the public view.

We have now left the epic ages far behind and are entering the historic period of Buddhist India. Roughly and for the purposes of this paper, I should like you mentally to link up the two periods with such historical facts as I have been able to gather.

Scholars allow a period of a thousand years between the Kurukshetra war and the coronation of Nanda Mohapadma who was made king of Magadh by that great Brahman statesman and King-maker Chanakya, also known as Kautilya of the "Artha Shastra" fame. Nanda's coronation took place shortly before Alexander's invasion of the Punjab in 326 B. C.

In connection with that invasion, let me incidentally tell you that Alexander and his Greek army crossed the Indus at Attock and that in this he had the help and guidance of a Hindu king who easily betrayed his country, a failing Hindu history affords numberless instances, which biologists ascribe to degeneracy and decay on the part of the Hindus as a race. Impartial moralists say that Ravana and the Dravido-Nagas whom the Vedic-Aryans had grossly betrayed were being slowly but surely avenged.

Another fact to be noted is that immediately after the departure of Alexander and his Greeks, King Nanda was deposed for his inefficiency by the same King-maker Chanakya who made Chandragupta Mauriya the King of Magadh, whom I shall refer to as Chandragupta I.

We may take it that the coronation of Nanda took place in 324 B.C. and that therefore the great war took place in 1324 B.C. Some scholars however say that the great war took place in 2000 to 2500 B.C. But nothing serious turns on this, as no important historical event took place. I am content to adopt for the purposes of this paper the later date, namely, 1324 B. C. as being correct. During the long period of a thousand years there was the growth of our corporate institutions to which I have already referred.

Besides that, during that long and dark period, Magadh (roughly the present Bihar with Puspapura or Patna as its capital) became the political centre of gravity in Hindusthan upon the decline and effacement of 'Hastinapur' and 'Indra-Prastha' of the Kuru-Pandavas.

The veil has been slightly lifted up by our esteemed friend and brother the Hon'ble Mr. K. P. Jayaswal, M.A., Bar.-at-Law (Patna), who has rapidly made an acknowledged name for himself as an investigator and Epigraphist (for a summary of his researches on the subject, see the March 1919 number, page 2, of the Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society). He says upon a close examination of the Matsya, Vayu and other Purans on the chronology of the Brihadratha dynasty of Magadh, that there were fifteen kings of this line, before the Mahabharat war (in which Sahadeva of that line fought and fell) and there were twenty-seven kings after the war, the whole dynasty reigning for one thousand years and the last twenty-seven kings for 697 years until 727 B.C. when they were supplanted by the Saisnuka dynasty.

In those days there was frequent change of dynasties. Various unimportant ones flourished between the Saisnuka dynasty and that of King Ajatsatru during whose reign Buddha was born in 563 B.C., that is, 237 years before Alexander's invasion.

Instances of trusted generals rising against their own masters and establishing their own dynasty had become quite the fashion in India of those days, as also of ruling kings being killed by their own sons for getting hold of the fathers' Kingdoms.

King Ajatsatru was murdered by his son Bimbisara and the latter was the ruling King in Magadh when Buddha proclaimed his faith, which was a revolt against the corrupt Brahmanism of those days.

At King Bimbisara's invitation Buddha and Mahabir made their centres at Magadh for at least 12 years, preaching their great truths to all in Pali which had become the language of the people, and not in Sanskrit which had been and still is the language of the rituals of the Brahman Priests.

Buddha's more than Mahabir's was the great heresy which the Vaishnabite Brahmans alleged "obscured the divine light of Vedic inspiration and hastened India along

the path of unrighteousness which would not be arrested until the end of the Kali-Yuga when Vishnu would come as Kalki Avatar."

Here again we see the Vaishnabite with his old and impotent "Avatar" trick and prophesy, the truth or falsity of which we shall not live long enough to be able to test, as according to them the present Kali-Yuga is still to continue for considerably over four lakhs of years.

As regards their gross accusation against Buddhism, for ushering India into the path of unrighteousness, it is untrue as a fact. The guilty party is the Brahman himself, who tries his best to shift the blame on to others. The accusation is unbelievable as it is made *ex parte* and centuries after Buddhism had virtually left India.

Be sure, that the disruption and banishment of Buddhism from its birth-place is intimately connected with and in my humble opinion, one of the principal contributory causes which led to the decline and fall of the Hindus, who having surrendered themselves to the Brahmanic hierarchy, never realised in the past how the rigidity of the Brahmanic system prevented them from forming into a nation or combining into an iron wall for defensive purposes against foreign inroads and invasions. It is the Brahmanic system that betrayed the Hindus, and if that system were analysed it cannot but be evident that it will ever continue to do so.

It cannot be denied that the Hindu-India of Buddha's period groaned under the tyranny of the Brahmans. Their Vedic sacrificial rituals of nauseating slaughter based on Tantras and Mantras had penetrated every concern of public and private life great and small and had disgusted the masses as well as the better element in society.

Not only did these sacrificial ceremonies cost enormous amount of money, but at state functions, such as the kings' coronations or the favourite queens' birthdays, these would absorb a whole year of the attention and time

of the royal courts, to the detriment of the affairs of state; and to counteract this evil, the moral fervour of Mahabir's and Buddha's teachings with their bloodless sacrifices were preferred, as well as to escape from the greedy lecherous clutches of the Brahman priests.

From the historical standpoint of the growth of institutions in Ancient India, it is a myth to assert, as the priestly Brahman theologians are wont to do, that the 'Hindu religious system or Hinduism' is based on "Sanatan Varnasram Dharma," meaning thereby that you must keep unsullied your race and colour and perform the duties of Asram-life, that is, by going to a teacher for a number of years for learning and then by being a householder and marrying, and later in life by retiring from the world for performing religious practices including that of going away to the jungles for meditation.

As regards their 'Varna or Race and colour,' we have seen that the same could not be kept pure; that for the sake of self-preservation, they, the comparatively small band of Vedic-Aryan colonists, had to intermarry extensively with the swarthy Dravido-Nagas. To know how extensive these intermarriages were, you have only to glance through the pages of the Mahabharat.

To the free intermixture that took place in the prehistoric times is due the innumerable sub-castes that you come across in ancient and modern India. How otherwise is the blue-black complexion of Ram or the black complexion of Shrikrishna explicable? They are the two outstanding "God-Heroes" of the Epics.

Owing to the re-grouping of the peoples into various guilds and corporations which were known as 'Gana,' 'Sreni,' 'Jati,' 'Sangha,' without any marked distinction in meaning between the terms themselves, the interested Brahman priests and theologians compendiously called them "Varna" to keep up the old nomenclature without any reference to the purity of the original blonde complexion of the Vedic-Aryans.

That I am correct in my interpretation would be evident from the permissive "Aso-Varna" marriages that take place. A man from Varna "A" for catching fish marries a girl from Varna "B" for catching wild birds. There 'Varna' does not mean race or colour but the guild or the Sreni or the Jati. The best form of marriage, I dare say, would be if a man from guild "A" married a girl of his own guild but outside the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. So the connotative or derivative meaning of the term "Varna" was the guild or the corporation to which a man or a woman belonged.

Again to keep up the old nomenclature, the ingenious Brahman made a pun on the word "Asram." This word need not always mean a quiet hermitage of a Rishi giving instructions to students and doing his meditations. It means anything which one adheres to or sticks on to. A tree is the Asram for the bird which it gives shelter to. A house is the Asram for the family which lives in it. A Judge's post is the Asram for the Judge. A Barrister's profession is his Asram. Anything which is caught hold of for one's safety and protection or living is his Asram. So, for the man belonging to any guild, the guild itself is his Asram.

That which has not undergone any change is "Sanatan," meaning also 'primordial,' 'existing from the beginning,' original. In "Sanatan-Varna-Asram" the final 'a' of Varna is short and nearest to it is the long "A" of Asram and Sanskrit Grammar permits their combination into one long "A." Thus we get "Sanatan-Varnasram," add to it "Dharma" which means "doing one's duty" primarily. It has other applied meanings such as 'religion,' 'religious practices,' 'righteousness,' 'justice' and so forth, which need not trouble us. Therefore "Sanatan-Varnasram-Dharma," which is said to be the foundation on which Hinduism rests, enjoins every Hindu dutifully to adhere to one's own guild which has unchangingly existed from the beginning. It enjoins nothing else and at once ensures the supremacy of the

Brahmans as the top-dogs of Hinduism, which must according to them perish if they, the top-dogs, disappeared. Such is Vanity! And to such lengths would self-interest carry even the spiritual Gurus of the Race! How lofty the Ideal which the trickery of the Brahmans has held out for the upward evolution of the race. It stops all caste competitions for ever: no labour strikes in ancient Hindu India; no dreaded Bolshevism to be preached anywhere in ancient Hindu-India to upset the Brahmanic heaven-born superiority.

But as a matter of fact Buddhism was that Bolshevist bomb-shell in ancient Hindu-India, for the upsetting of the Brahmanic hierarchy. Now you can understand why the arm of the Brahman would be up against the Buddhist and why it was necessary for the Brahman to lay stress on his "Sanatan-Varnasram-Dharma" and to make it the *sine-qua-non* of his "Ism." It was to prevent people from joining the "new Asrams or Sanghas" which began to spring up under the ægis of Buddhism.

All school-going children know the life-history of these two Rishis of ancient India: Mohabir and Buddha. The doctrines of Buddha's being democratic and simple, became so popular as to be hailed by the rest of Asia and beyond.

In those days Kshatriya kings being few and far between, Sudra kings sprang up in various parts of the country. It became an age for the emancipation and uplift of the Sudras, of the down-trodden and of the oppressed classes, including the women. During Buddha's time and for many centuries thereafter, Sudra kings ruled over Magadh.

As between Brahmanism and Buddhism it became evident from the outset that it was a conflict of Ideals and Methods. The one was based on a perpetual, static, caste-system wherein the Brahmans, the priestly class, must rule as the lords of creation. It was a close ecclesiastical-class-autocracy as Brahmanship became descendible from father to son. Whereas the other, Buddhism, abolished the

caste altogether, denied the Brahmanic-supermanship and preached the democratic doctrine of equality, fraternity, morality and rationality. It was iconoclastic and showed up the utter futility of Vedic rituals and of worshipping Vedic Gods. As regards faith in a personal God, it was plainly agnostic.

Buddhism echoed the teachings of Kapila that the existence of a personal God was not provable. It asserted that humanity need not bother itself about the question whether a personal God exists or not, but that the world in which we lived was governed by stern and unchanging moral laws, *i. e.*, the laws of Karma, meaning thereby "as thou shalt sow, so shalt thou reap," that the whole creation as manifested was based on eternal principles of evolution and that this human world of sorrow and misery was chained up with the ever rotatory chain of Birth and Death, and that to escape from this chain was mookti or salvation or Nirvana which could be attained only by the practice of righteousness and purity in one's thoughts, words and deeds, and abstention from strong drinks and bloodshed, and doing injury or harm to nobody—not even to a worm.

As against the Brahman's "Sanatan-Varnasram-Dharma," it unfurled the flag of "Ahimsa-Parama-Dharma," meaning thereby that one's duty lay in "abstaining from jealousy and bloodshed."

Thus it came about that the Brahmans waged a bitter war to the knife as against the Buddhist—an uncompromising and unrelenting war—whenever favourable opportunities arose throughout the long centuries of our dismal history, steeped in blood and carnage, in venomous persecution, in jealousy, meanness and spite, unparalleled, I believe, even in the world's history of conflicts of religions, far too ghastly and hideous though its pages already are.

True that the Brahmans triumphed in the end and succeeded in driving Buddhism out of India, but alas! at what a cost to the Indian social fabric! A full and complete history of this "Brahman-Bauddha" war has yet to

be written and studied by our people, to be thoroughly able to grasp how in consequence thereof the whole society had become viciously immoral, disorganised and decadent and tottering from a time long before the advent of the Mussalmans.

Let us see now, how the practical side of Buddhism affected the people, their character and institutions. The sublime teachings of Buddha from the outset appealed to the women and the Sudras, who belonged to the lowest order of the Hindu social system, as well as to the student communities.

Naturally the Brahman priests with their lay followers, particularly the wealthy and the respectable, became bitterly hostile to the new Heresy as it had threatened to storm the Brahmanic citadel. To the Brahman priests that citadel meant everything that made life dear and worth living. In it they had so much vested interest which they had sedulously reared and selfishly maintained. For them the surrender of that citadel meant extinction. With what wrongs and iniquities the foundations required to be repaved and riveted were of no consideration, provided the citadel itself was kept up, for with it was bound up their own lives.

How oppressive and iniquitous that citadel has been and still is can easily be appreciated if, for the purpose of my explaining the matter, our social organisation were regarded as a huge, colossal, upright pillar of human atoms, encased by iron tubes placed tier upon tier from the bottom till the topmost cornice was reached.

At the very bottom of the pillar you have the untouchable-Sudras. On their heads place a well-fitting, ventilation-proof, thick iron sheet on which put the touchable-Sudras, and on their heads again place a similar iron sheet. On this sheet put the Vaisyas, on whose heads a similar iron sheet being placed, let the Kshatriyas stand on it, and likewise let another sheet rest on the heads of the Kshatriyas and on that let the Brahmans stand.

heir social pillar must sink; and that the Sudra element being thus eliminated from the social pillar, the Vaisyas, under the law of gravitation, was bound to fall to the bottom and take the place of the Sudras.

The Sudras found solace and consolation in Buddhism for their emancipation from the Brahmanic thraldom. They joined the Buddhist Sanghas and for the first time began to get education. A new world of usefulness and activity opened out even to them, who had been the hewers of wood and drawers of water in society. In a few years the Sudra young men were able to take the field as Sramanas or itinerant teachers going about from village to village teaching the younger generation. The educated Dwija-class young men from joint-families who had sufficient patriotism broke away from their families and joined the Buddhist Sanghas and swelled the throng of the Sramanas. The most experienced and learned amongst them became missionaries and preachers.

The agnosticism in Buddhism and its social service appealed to the young intellects of the race and Buddhism grew and grew. The self-sacrifice of the noble founder and his own purity of life attracted even Buddha's enemies, some of whom felt proud to become his trusted disciples.

Let us next see how Buddhism affected our women. Under the corporate system of society, before Buddha's time, in which the peoples had regrouped themselves resulting in the Hindu joint-family to which I have already drawn your attention, unmarried women's freedom came to be considerably curbed. Their pre-existing freedom of choice in getting husbands came to be confined to the young men of the same corporations to which their fathers, brothers, uncles or guardians belonged.

In case of the girls refusing to submit to such marriages, which came to be based on arrangement more than on mutual choice, there resulted bitter quarrels and feuds in the end between the two families of the parties. Girls were coerced of course. Sometimes they rebelled

Now you have the human atoms in the pillar well-grouped and tabulated. On the outside of the pillar commencing from the top write downwards in big letters "Varnasram-Dharma." And for my further illustration, let the letter "m" of "Varnasram" be placed where the top-surface of the thick iron-sheet is on which stand the Vaisyas inside the pillar and let the letter "D" of Dharma be placed where the bottom surface of the same sheet is, such bottom surface being in touch with the heads of the touchable-Sudras. Also, let there be a flag flying from the topmost cornice of the pillar with this inscription on it:—"Hindu Samaj." Now you have a complete picture of our caste system.

How heavily the weight of the whole pillar would tell on those that are at the bottom can be well left to your imagination. What have Brahmans, the top-dogs of that system, done for the amelioration of the condition of the Sudras? And is it to be wondered at that the Sudras became the first converts to Buddhism which broke the bonds that held them down!

Even to-day the same process of depletion from the bottom is going on. The Namo-Sudras and other depressed classes are steadily deserting the Hindu-fold and becoming converts to other faiths. But the Brahmans do not care. They have become supine and indifferent as to the future of the Hindu Samaj.

The Brahmans though always at the giddy top of that colossal social pillar were not so supine and indifferent in Buddha's time (as they have since become) as not to notice as to how the weight of their own "Varnasram" was squeezing out the "Dharma" (so marked on the pillar) atoms or the Sudra-element from the bottom of their social pillar.

But as the Brahmans were impotent to prevent the inevitable leakage, their wrath and hatred against Buddha and Buddhism became the more concentrated and virulent. They felt with justifiable alarm that without the Súdras

their social pillar must sink; and that the Sudra element being thus eliminated from the social pillar, the Vaisyas, under the law of gravitation, was bound to fall to the bottom and take the place of the Sudras.

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and ran away from their homes and were never more allowed to enter the same. Social usages and customs were in transition and these family mishaps were not infrequent. It came to this, that parents of girls preferred to get them married when young, long before they attained their majority.

Young men also suffered from the limitation of choice of brides which the joint-family system imposed. As that system grew and grew the old natural method of love matches became less and less. And Indian young men and young women ceased to fall in love with each other before marriage, for want of opportunity, for want of sufficient freedom from espionage; and this undoubtedly affected the character of the race, a matter I have already drawn your attention to.

Within the four walls of the joint-family, bitter experience revealed the truth, that educated brides, who upon attainment of majority had been made victims of arranged marriages without there being the antinuptial dues of love to sweeten their temperament, were much more difficult to be subdued and trained up by their mothers-in-law, the presiding mistresses or Grihinies of the joint-family households. Revolts on the part of the daughters-in-law were also not infrequent, causing quarrels, and if the married sons happened to back their own respective wives, then disruption and division of the family and its estates were the inevitable result.

Thus mothers of bridegrooms also, in joint-families, for the sake of the greater peace it ensured, preferred young brides (long before their attaining majority, and later, as society became more decadent, before their attaining puberty even) and less educated brides (in fact ignorant ones) for their marriageable sons. Proverbs such as "Colts have to be broken when young," "Bamboo twigs could be bent when young" came into existence and helped to shape the custom in society in getting girls married when young.

An individual can afford to be individualistic and lead any kind of life he or she pleases. But the male or female members of a joint-family cease to be separate entities or individuals. They have as individuals to sink their own idiosyncracies or likes and dislikes for the common benefit of the joint-family which is regarded as the social unit or entity. It is the direct result of the corporate system to which I have already drawn your attention.

A joint-family in a village or town belonging to any particular corporation or guild must take its lead in matters social from other joint-families belonging to the same corporation or guild.

In a joint-family of two brothers having four daughters between them, the eldest, let us suppose, is given in marriage. In such a household, the remaining three could not be possibly allowed to grow up to be elderly spinsters or 'learned blue stockings' to lead any kind of life they liked without the matter being talked about in a derogatory manner at the general meetings of those corporations.

For mutuality as between the members of a corporation had to be observed. As the eldest daughter, in the above example, was married to a joint-family boy, so this boy's brother, uncle and cousin belonging to the same joint-family as himself had the right to seek for brides in the person of those three unmarried girls therein mentioned.

It soon became an unwritten law of those corporations, under the guidance of the Brahmans, that all girls belonging to the members of joint-family households under the ægis of those corporations must be given in marriage when young. Any breach of that unwritten law was punished by the expulsion from the corporation of that law-breaking joint-family, which had no alternative other than submitting.

It was the fear of the *carte blanche* freedom of the Buddhists that made the astute Brahmans lend their

support to the wholly irrational, unscientific and mischievous standardisation of the marriageable age for girls being the pre-puberty period.

Since the Mahabharat period it is 'fear' and not 'freedom' that has gone on giving birth to our civic institutions, which in their turn have blessed us with usages and customs which have shaped and moulded our racial character, sapping all individuality and originality in us.

All Hindus, however much they may differ in their respective dresses and sandal-marks on their foreheads, are products of the same or similar Joint-Family-Grinding-Mills in which there is no room, nor can there be any, for new thoughts or movements for social welfare.

In those J. F. G. Mills everything, from birth to death and beyond, has been chalked out for men, women and children. All they need do is to go on involuntarily rotating like set spokes in a wheel. No thought is needed. No will is needed. Directly one asks the "why and wherefore" of things there is the rub.

There is no room for that questioning attitude, or flying one's own standard of individuality, in the Hindu system, which requires automatic submission. Hence our social usages and customs have become wholly artificial and tyrannical. Hindus of light and culture and true refinement, notwithstanding their deep and inward protests at times, have to be victims of that artificial system, wherein to preserve one's conscience one must either leave it, which is not always feasible and often ruinous and impracticable, or be a moral coward and submit, bidding adieu to one's ideals for ever. The latter course is usually followed, being one of 'least resistance.'

Where the system, by which you allow your life and conduct (in other words your character) to be moulded and shaped, does not permit you to live up to your own ideal, is there any other course left for you than being a hypocrite for the rest of your life?

A man with blasted ideals, what good do you expect him to get out of his own life or to do to others or to the society he belongs? Thenceforth, what Gods out of the Hindu Trinity, can you tell me, would save him from being a pessimist—a misanthrope? Are not most Hindus of culture and refinement utter pessimists and misanthropes, inwardly weighed down under the sense of that wrong and injustice which his social system and not any of the Gods of his Trinity has inflicted upon him, thwarting his own growth as a man in his own estimation?

Where men weep cursing their own lot, can the women laugh? In a system where individuals are so thwarted in attaining to their own proper height of manhood and womanhood, you can have only dwarfs born amongst you and not giants, to carry on the work of propagation. It is inevitable.

It must however be recorded in letters of gold that there have been many a hero—many a Hindu of high purpose and nobility of soul—who defiant of the narrowness and rigidity of the present system, made themselves martyrs to the cause of social reform and sowed the seeds for the birth of that renaissance which we are fervently looking forward to.

To return once more to the ancient joint-family system. It was the fear of the effect of education upon girls in the joint-families which shaped its policy in that behalf. "Where ignorance is bliss it is folly to be wise" was strictly followed in those families, with the result that girls' education before their marriage came to be neglected from a very remote past.

During the Mahabharat period and for many centuries thereafter every girl was enjoined to learn 63 different arts including reading, writing, music, singing, painting, embroidery, dyeing, cooking, whistling bird-taming and training, flower-gardening, floral decorating, and love-making, and various other things for which you may well peruse Vatsayna's 'Kama-Sastra.' Scholars think that he flourished about a century and a quarter before Buddha.

Owing to the revolts amongst girls in the joint-families, to which I have drawn your attention, you find that from a time long before Buddha's advent there had sprung up a class of women—rebels against the rigour of society—leading a life of their own. They made fine arts their speciality and held their own courts where men of light and leading paid homage. They did not believe in marriage, but came to be attached to men simply through ties of love which were more sacred to them than the priest's ritualistic ceremony of marriage. They became unmarried wives and unmarried mothers and were jealously looked upon and later looked down upon by the "respectable Mrs. Grundys" of ancient India.

The shrewd Brahman priests had to sail in with the "respectable Mrs. Grundys," deserting the fair "rebels." The 63 feminine arts were at fault and these were thu: driven out of the homes of the "respectable Mrs Grundys" to make them more respectable.

Though deserted by the Brahman priests, the "fai rebels" never ceased to be courted in secret by the "res pectable Mrs. Grundys'" husbands, brothers, brothers-in-law and sons-in-law; all these finding in the company of the "fair rebels" an outlet for their pent-up souls; as to them the four walls of the joint-family households had become no better than joyless prisons.

Learned and artistic as these 'fair rebels' were, to them Buddha's teachings opened out a new heaven and a new earth. Like the Sudras, they too embraced Buddhism with enthusiasm and the most religious-minded amongst them became the nuns of the Buddhist church, their function being to educate the girls and to nurse the sick in hospitals which came to be established very extensively in India under the Buddhists.

Buddhism, be it noted, sprang from the bosom of Brahmanism and was based upon the latter's philosophic doctrines. It was a protestant movement for reform from within—a reform which sought to let ir

of love, charity, humanity and righteousness into a society whose arteries had become ossified, rigid and callous under the weight and pressure of the Brahmanic misrule.

I have already told you how Buddhism fascinated the keen intellectual student communities and how ardently they responded to the call of the new reform movement.

It lit a veritable torch of rationalism in India unlike anything that had gone before, and the Brahman became full of fear and began plotting and scheming against the movement.

Buddha's method of carrying on propagandist work among the masses by preaching in Pali was new, as also by the establishment of the system of celibacy amongst a band of enthusiastic men and women followers. He thus for the first time created monks and nuns as arms of his church, as also a body of self-sacrificing young men called 'Sramanas' to go about imparting secular and religious knowledge to the masses, to which I have already referred.

His bid for democracy under his flag of 'Ahinsa parama dharma' fairly knocked the sordid, gluttonous and libidinous Brahman priest down on the ground, and this new reform movement grew apace to the eternal glory of India and Asia.

And to-day, standing as we do on a shelterless deck of a helmless bark, enduring the boisterous winds of the strong, greedy, meaty, rummy and beery culture of the materialistic civilisation of the West, daubed and tarnished and roped in as degenerates, if there be any room to hide our faces in mental shame and agony for protection and refuge, it would be still in that all-merciful, all-loving bosom of the greatest, loftiest, the most spiritually-minded Asiatic to whom all China, Japan, Corea, Siam, Cambodia, Burma, Ceylon, Tibet, and last but not the least his own mother-land, India, are one.

In the darkening gloom of that occidental materialistic culture, which we cannot assimilate without the risk of being engulfed, denationalised, and reduced to nothingness, it is Him, the Light of Asia, my beloved countrymen, that we may still look to for guidance in that religio-social renaissance which is coming and for which India confidently and yet patiently and fervently waits.

The world's history of Buddha's period, namely, the 5th and 6th centuries B.C., you will find, is of entrancing interest. From a considerable time before Buddha, commercial intercourse between Greece and India had been going on through Mesopotamia. There was no prohibition of voyaging on the Kalapani in those days.

Very soon after Buddha passed away, you find that Heracleitus of Ephesus and Pythagoras of Samos were preaching Buddhistic doctrines and establishing religious Sanghas.

What is labelled now as the 'Hellenic culture, bearing the proud hall-mark of the West, was the culture of Asia Minor and to the extent the Greek cities in Asia Minor had been able to borrow same from India. Neither colour nor cultural bar had separated the West and the East in those days.

Zoroaster, Zarathustra of the Parsis, also flourished at about that time. His teachings, however, failed to break down the caste barriers amongst the Parsis, who suffered also under their priesthood.

As regards Alexander's invasion of the Punjab which took place in 326 B.C., it was ephemeral, leaving no impression. For, in their closest contact, Indian culture of those days stood superior to the Hellenic, as the former had by far the greater vitality and creative power. I pass it by as of no importance, save and except stating that the clash led to the foundation of the all-India Mauryan Empire of which Chandra Gupta was the first monarch upon the dethronement of Nanda Mahapadma, through the help of the King-maker Chanakya who, though a

Brahman by caste, was thoroughly pro-Buddhistic and a patriot of a very high order. It is my belief that it was he who dreamt of creating the greater India, *i. e.* "Mahabharat," which is unjustifiably and without any historical basis to support the same, attributed to Sree Krishna.

Our Vedic Aryans, unlike the Romans, had their classic literature, their epics and philosophy of the Upanishads before Athens was built. The classics of Greece, in art and literature, were a part of the spoils of war of the Romans with Egypt and Carthage. We all know that the Romans, though decadent, conquered Greece, permeating through and through its small and scattered and isolated city states. Those city states, while grovelling under the heel of their conquerors, enjoyed only such freedom as their conquerors chose to give them. This Hellenic culture is trotted out in the halls of Oxford and Cambridge as the "Unique China of the European Cupboard." Unperturbed, India smiles.

What Chandra Gupta built, Asoka, his grandson, consolidated and magnified and crowned it with Buddhism as the State Religion in India, and we come to the glorious period of Indian History—272-231 B.C.

Asoka's Empire spread from the Bay of Bengal to Kabul and as far south as river Palar beyond Mysore. He made the country more productive by irrigation. Popular and compulsory education came to be in vogue for the first time in India and the University of Nalanda became famous for its learning.

What school boy or girl does not know of Asoka's edicts and the moral fervour of the inscription contained in them? But in our vast India the literates are only 6 per cent. and compulsory popular education has not yet come to us as it has come to the Japanese, the Coreans and the Philippines. So 94 per cent. of our people does not know who Asoka was.

It would thus be worth while to repeat wh[illegible] edics contained. They taught the people the v[illegible]

kindness and truthfulness and prohibited the slaughter of animals. They commanded the people to obey their parents and to be liberal and considerate and charitable to friends, acquaintances, relatives, Brahmans and ascetics, and to avoid extravagance and violence of language.

Buddhism as Asoka sought to teach it was not opposed to Hinduism, because liberality to Brahmans was enjoined. It was a supreme effort on his part to lift up the Hindus to rise to something higher and purer than the Hinduism of those days.

In a country where people took to becoming monks and nuns at the call of religion, at the call of a higher ideal of life and service, child marriages and the purdah system could not have prevailed among the masses, save and except in the joint-family households.

I have this to say however against Asoka's policy, that after his bloody war in Orissa by which he brought that province under his sway, he disbanded his army in disgust, believing that military force was not needed in a country like India.

The root of the decay of Buddhistic power was there. Kingly power must always be based on force, and Asoka in a fit of religious enthusiasm disrupted the very force which had sustained him. In the hands of his descendants, the Buddhistic central power dwindled through the want of military power, though Buddhism as a religion was spread rapidly from country to country, first by Asoka's preachers and later by King Kanishka's missionaries.

From 200 B.C. to 600 A.D. is a record of chaos in India. Small kingdoms rose and fell, as the central power without any army could not maintain its rule over the outskirts of the Empire where Hindu kingdoms began to rear their heads. There was the rise of the Andhra dynasty in amongst the Telegu-Dravidians in Madras and invasion of Minander in 155 B.C., who like Kanishka became a convert to Buddhism.

There is one incident of great interest which took place in 147 B.C. when a Brahman dynasty called the Sunga dynasty came into existence as the result of revolt against Buddhism and of dissatisfaction at the Magadh King Brihadratha's inaction in the face of Minander's invasion. The rise to power of the Sunga dynasty was followed by a general persecution of the Buddhists and of the revival of orthodox Hinduism.

This Hindu revival was a period of great literary activity and to it is to be ascribed the compilation of the Mahabhasya and Manava Dharma Shastra (Manu) and the Brahmanical redactions of our great Epics, the Mahabharat and the Ramayan.

The overweening claims put forward in these works on behalf of the Brahmans and the hostility therein displayed to the Sudras are explained by the fact that a Brahman dynasty was in power and that it had displaced a line of Sudra kings.

The above remark is based on the combined opinion of Mr. Jayaswal and Pandit Hara Prosad Sastri as given in the Behar Research Society's journal to which I have already referred.

In 320 A.D. you see again a range of powerful Gupta kings. Of this line the first king Chandra Gupta II, his son Samudra Gupta and his son Chandra Gupta III had all become Chatrapatis or all-India Emperors of India, subjugating the other small kingdoms.

This Chandra Gupta III is identified with the famous Bikram in whose court the famous poet Kalidas flourished.

These Gupta kings were non-Vedic reformed Hindus, but not Buddhists. Under them Hinduism and Buddhism flourished side by side, each influencing the other, and that Buddhist Tantriks influenced Hinduism in accepting the many gods and goddesses into its Pantheon as aids to contemplation and concentration for per[illegible]g various kinds of Sadhana or occult and mystic dev[illegible] advocated by

the Taxila University, the centre of the Mahayana School of Buddhism, which I have tried to explain further later on.

This was a time of Hindu religious revival. Temples came to be built on every side to vie with the Buddhist stupas and monasteries. The puranas were written up and the code of Manu and the Ramayan and the Mahabharat were again redacted and edited and brought up to date.

In 406 A.D. we have the remarkable visit of Fa Hian to our country. He found Hinduism and Buddhism flourishing side by side and that the people killed no living thing and drank no wine, that there were hospitals for the poor, and medicine, food and drink were given to the sick free of charge.

In A. D. 528 there took place the invasion of the white Huns who were driven out by a confederacy of Hindu Kings headed by Yasodharaman or Vikramadhitya II. Some say that it was this king in whose court Kalidas flourished.

In A. D. 606 and 646 we get another powerful Hindu monarch in the person of Harsha. He was a patron of Sanskrit and tolerant so far as Buddhists and Buddhism were concerned. In his Court there used to be rival debates between the Brahmans and Buddhists. During the preceding centuries Hinduism was gradually assimilating all the good things of Buddhism. In Harsha's time it was found that both the systems had become Tantrikised to a great extent, leaving very little in the shape of difference between them.

It was King Harsha who brought about a compromise between the Brahmans and the Buddhists by persuading the former to confer the Paita or the sacred-thread on the eminent ecclesiastics of the Buddhist church and persuading the latter to accept the same as a mark of the greatest and highest honour. The Brahmans yielded to such an extent that they agreed to recognise Buddha as one of their Avatars.

A powerful monarch's persuasion could hardly have been refused by the Buddhist chiefs on the face of so much complacency, friendliness and overtures on the part of the Brahmans, particularly as the great Buddhist University at Nalanda (whose site has not yet been located and where there were at the time 10,000 studeuts) used to enjoy a royal grant of the revenues of a hundred mouzahs.

The above compromise was one of necessity no doubt. But it was a moral defeat all the same for the Buddhists, involving the surrender of its high principles of Equality and Freedom from the caste system.

From this moral surrender the Buddhists can hardly be said to have rallied on the soil of India. The example of the most highly placed in their church was followed by their followers. A new revival of Hinduism set in, which threatened to swamp Buddhism altogether. Fresh schisms further rent their church, and though Buddhism continued to exist for another two centuries it gradually became moribund, as men of intellect, ability and character ceased to get enrolled into their church. The famous Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang, who visited India about this time, certified that Buddhism was declining and Brahmanism reviving with all the strength of a new-born religion, that the Hindus were truthful, honest and law-abiding, that they abstained from killing animals and taking strong drinks.

Hindu Kings such as the Sen Kings of Magadh and King Sasanka of Gour who came after Harsha were, under the guidance of their Brahman ministers, wholly hostile to their Buddhist subjects. Royal grants were discontinued and the famous Nalanda vanished. Monasteries and nunneries and Sanghas came to be disestablished and their properties confiscated. To be casteless was the sign of a Buddhist who came to be looked down upon and persecuted. A spirit of vandalism took possession of the revivalist Hindus of those days and

Buddhist sacred relics were defiled and dishonoured and destroyed. . . . .

During the 8th and 9th centuries India came to be split up into innumerable small kingdoms. Such splitting up was due to there being no central power and there being the inroads of the Scythian hordes into Rajputana and their settling down there and replacing all the old Aryan principalities. They had to be placated. They were friendly to the Hindus and were Hinduised by the Brahmans by the conferring of the sacred-thread. Their personal valour marked them out to be fit subjects worthy to take the place of the ancient Kshatriyas. It is untrue to say that Hinduism was never a proselytising system.

These Scythian settlers of Rajputana came to be the famous Rajputs of Indian history, and their first usefulness was in stemming the tide of the first Mussulman invasion of Sindh in 712 A.D. This gave the Rajputs a tremendous and a lordly position in India: Delhi and Kanauj soon came under them.

As regards the Rajput princes of those days, it may be stated that they were individually brave, but eaten up with conceit and jealousy, and as their Kingdoms were small and scattered, for want of proper roads and means of communications in the country, they could not evolve a federal system of Government or militarily so organise themselves as to be effective against what was the frequent menace of that period, namely, the inroads of the Mussulmans.

The fulsome flattery and adulation on the part of the Brahmans soon found a way in linking up these princely Rajput houses with the ancient and mythical heroes of the Indian Epics by a series of genealogical tables. The vanity thus engendered in them, together with the life of luxury and ease with which they came to surround themselves, made them blind to the poverty-stricken condition of their subjects. Full of passion and prejudice, they were soon inflamed against their Buddhist subjects by the

incitements of the Brahmans, amongst whom you find no less a personage than the great Sankarācharya who was the very idol of the Rajput princes.

It was due to the incitements of Sankarācharya in 830 A.D. following upon the footsteps of Kumārila Bhatta, another great fighting Brahman religious reformer from the south (Circa, 750 A.D.), that the Buddhist mass population were again persecuted throughout Northern, Western and Central India (namely, Kashmere, Nepal, Punjab, Rajputana and the Jumna and the Gangetic valleys including the present Behar) at the hands of the Rajput kings and their Hindu allies.

The Buddhists were like flocks of sheep without shepherds. Their villages were devastated, homes plundered, women dishonoured, and men and children either banished or slaughtered. The remnants of the Buddhist population were ostracised and boycotted from decent livelihood and so they were forced to take the lowest of the lowly positions. Our present-day untouchable classes of Haries, Domes, Muchies, Chamars, Keoras, Bagdies, Namasudras, and Pariahs are the descendants of those Buddhist remnants.

In those persecutions the personal part that Sankarācharya and his followers played are fully borne out by the Kumāon and Nepal traditions and legends. At his command the Kathuria Rajas drove the Buddhists out of Gharwal, Kumāon and Nepal. Thereupon their most important religious establishments were made over to Sankara's followers, whose descendants still enjoy them. He made the Buddhist Bhiksus offer bloody sacrifices and married the monks to the nuns.

It is worth while reminding you that Buddha himself was a great Yōgi. His followers, centuries after his passing away, found it more convenient for their meditating upon his sublime virtues and as an aid to their Yoga and Sadhana to think of his earthly features. The Mahayana school of Buddhists of which the great University of

Taxila was the centre, went on encouraging amongst the pupils the contemplation of other figures such as the Lotus and the Six Yoga-chakras besides that of Buddha's own features. What the Great Buddhist scholar and philosopher Nagarjuna as the head of that University and other professors, tutors, graduates and undergraduates metaphysically contemplated, the sister school of Art at Gandhara materialised in clay, stone and metal. And the result was that the country came to be flooded with Buddha images and Yoga symbols, and one found them particularly in all Buddhist temples and Sanghas in all villages and towns wherever there was a Buddhist congregation.

The white contemplative figure of Buddha lent itself easily to being converted to that of the God Shiva, whose worshipper the Great Sankara avowedly was. Under his orders all the Buddha images in Buddhist temples were converted into Shiva images by the encircling of snakes, the symbol of Shiva, round the necks of these images.

It is hard to think, from this distance of time, if cruelty, brutality, sacrilege and desecration could have gone further than what it did in disrupting and banishing Buddhism out of India. All sense of toleration was forgotten. Sankara felt, that like his God Shiva—the Rudra, the destroyer—his mission in life was to destroy Buddhism. He was inspired by the thought that without destruction of Buddhism no recreation of Brahmanism was possible.

That was how Sankara and Brahmanism triumphed. The victory was won. But how it was a victory, in disrupting the backbone of the masses, which the Buddhist population of India certainly was, by the aid of the hired soldiery serving in the innumerable petty Hindu kingdoms of those days, Time and Nemesis have fully answered.

Religious reformers like Kumarila Bhutta and Sankara, in their zeal, forget that in the hands of mortals

such as themselves, the power of destruction by physical force and violence often reacts as a double-edged sword.

But Sankara was ambitious and a man of genius. He was not content by merely playing the part of the Rudra, the destroyer, he played the part of Brahma, the creator, also. He sought to recreate Brahmanism and through it a New India. He brought, it is said, blood and colour to Hinduism, moulding it as a philosophic religion of exuberant beauty and harmony through his teachings of the Vedanta, which, however, was too subtle in its abstractions to captivate the masses. Upon them the effect of the slaughter and disruption of their kith and kin, the Buddhists, was so great that they remained wholly irresponsive and apathetic to Sankara's call.

The conception of the latter-day Buddhism as propounded by the Taxila school, had entered the soul of the Hindu masses, who continued to adhere to their old ways of idol worship in all sorts of hideous Tantrik forms. Thus Sankara failed to recreate a New India which was his ambition to do. With his passing away the degeneracy which set in went on careering in full vigour, as particularly his theory of Illusion or Mayabad had a baneful effect upon society, creating idlers and fatalists.

Individuals, however strong and great they themselves may be, cannot uphold a continent, if the peoples, ground down by poverty and misrule, are nevertheless made a prey to perpetual exploitation, dwarfing their intellect through want of education, their physique through want of food and sustenance.

Extravagance, greed, unbridled sexual license and strong drinks would bring about the downfall of any man, and why not of a Nation, where each individual worthy of being called a man takes to such evil ways?

Amongst the Rajput princes between the 10th and 12th centuries incest and internal jealousy had become virulent. Respect for women had disappeared among men, who were as if accursed with that all-devouring

appetite of lust which knew no control. Along with carnal lust, the lust for gold and some land to set up a small kingdom for himself had become the prevailing curse among the Rajput princelings.

In the seraglio the kings, the fathers of these princelings, had too many wives and concubines, so that no particular royal dame cared a jot or tittle for her reigning lord and master.

In the royal courts of India dames and maids of the nobility and gentry would be invited, and if the royal glance fell on any, she must be procured—even by employing the recognised queen to play the procuress for her lord and master on pain of chastisement or death. Womanhood put to that degradation revolts.

In their turn the queens and royal dames had their lovers, and when the royal courts became corrupt their nefarious and contaminating influence went on corrupting the nobility and gentry who frequented the royal courts. What the nobility and gentry received from the royalty they meted out the same kind of treatment to their immediate followers and friends at a lower social level or avenged themselves by having intrigues with the queens or any other royal dames in the palace.

It became a common saying amongst the debauchees—and who were not in those days?—that all women, married or unmarried, could be procured, only by mere whistling.

And the Brahman priests,—did they not play their part in helping in the downward course, which they found probably impossible to check and remedy?

It came to this—that the lust for land was so great in those princelings, the itching to rule was so unconquerable in them, that they would murder their own father, the reigning king, when about to go to bed with any of their mothers, being helped by the latter in this foul deed. The queens were many in number and each was anxious to promote the interests of her own grown-up sons. It gradually came to be the custom of the royal courts that

the prince who succeeded in murdering the king, would seize the crown after putting his step-mothers and step-brothers to death. From the guilty royal wife's point of view it was far better that she should be the first in the field with her own son as the slayer, for then her son would be the king and she the royal mother.

To effect peaceful murders of their royal spouses, royal dames not only stooped to play the part of procuresses, but they, instead of procuring clean women, used to get, through the help of the Brahman priests and herbists, ready-made poisoned women-harlots, to touch whom was instant or agonising death.

Need I say as to why Mohamedan invaders succeeded in penetrating into India? Because corruption had eaten into the vitals of the Hindu body politic from before the Mussulman advent, that it had no power of resistance left in it. It had lost the power and virtue of effectually combining together against the common enemy. One push and the fabric fell like a house of cards.

There is an erroneous popular belief that our Brahmanic civilization since the Mahabharat period was peacefully flowing on and on, shedding milk and honey on its people, when the Hindu national fabric was all upset and ruined by the Mussulman invasions. They think that immediately after the period of Ram and Judhisthir, the Mussulmans began pouring into India. They do not reckon that many, many centuries had elapsed before the Mussulman rule commenced. Nor do they realise that the Mussulman invaders were able to come in and stay to rule because prior to that, Hindu society had become violently, disgustingly degraded and corrupt in the course of ages.

Now, gentlemen, that is my reading of India's past history as regards the causes that led to the downfall of the Hindus, of which I have given you as rapid a survey as it has been possible within the compass of even such a long paper as this.

Even now, after the lessons of those bygone centuries are the Hindus making any progress towards evolving a happier state of society for themselves? I do not think so. There is as yet no reform movement within them, so far as I have been able to ascertain, for putting their own house in order.

Thinking over our past and present degraded condition as a nation, I fell asleep one evening over this paper that I have been writing, and I dreamt that Mother India spoke to me thus:—

"The matter that is troubling you is the root of all evil in India which you do not seem to have been able to solve. Just think, is it not the want of sustained energy to remain indignant at the wrongs one section of your people get from another section of your own people? And why are not such wrongs put down with a heavy hand by the sufferers themselves?

"Look at Benares and other places of pilgrimage. Are they not sinks of iniquity? Is that the Hindu ideal to-day to pander to the grotesque? What virtue is not slaughtered in India through indifference, callousness, want of keenness in peoples, souls to see the right and do the right, to have the right done by dying if need be? In the name of good taste, compromise, toleration, patience, "no business of yours," vice is allowed to triumph.

"Cleanse your land of iniquities of your own doing first. That task is laid on *you.* Swindlers and deceivers and cheats in every sphere, be it in Religion, Art, Literature, Politics and market-places, in people's every-day dealings, in trade and commerce and business, should not go unpunished.

"The people of light and leading, of wealth and position and influence in every country are the trustees for the whole country and much is expected of them. Such personages in your country are either sycophants or

permit sycophancy to be practised upon them. Such personages are worshipped in India but not right principles. The worshipper and the worshipped are both in the wrong road. They that have must sacrifice their all, if need be, for those that have not any. In India sacrifice is needed, Martyrdom is needed at the hands of those that lead and teach the people.

"Your religious practices, social usages, have become debased, being devoid of truth. Brahmanism is the Religion of truth and sacrifice, and that is the Sanatan Dharma. Do your Brahman priests preach it—do your teachers teach it? Your teachers do not know, and without spiritual insight they cannot know the meaning of "Varnasram Dharma."

"Shakti pujah is not the worship of a black Goddess, with hideous rites as practised amongst you. Your national Shakti lies deep in the bosom of the submerged womanhood of your country. Hence, the old-time symbol painters painted that Shakti as a naked woman with a naked sword in hand and in deep sea-blue colour. She is your Goddess Kali. The figure at her feet is the symbol of the pretentious and lying Brahman priesthood, which she must trample upon and crush, wielding her naked sword of truth to vindicate her rights. Don't let that day dawn amongst you when the soured and distracted womanhood of your race will be forced to rid the land of a lying and pernicious priesthood actually with open sword in hand.

"Learn to recognise that women are human and have rights. Their surrender and enslavement to a lying priesthood and its noxious teachings have effected your ruin, sapped your manhood and your power of judging right from wrong. Your impulse to do the right, which under social terror you refrain from doing, is like a flash of lightning, which only reveals the depth of darkness in which you live, the moral cowardice, the spiritual depravity which you have made your own.

"Your manhood cannot be strengthened unless the Shakti comes from your womanhood, which can't be made strong unless its girlhood is strengthened. Girlhood is the most sacred flower of every Race, but with you girlhood is shocked, slaughtered and debased by the premature lustful touch of man.

"Let your girls grow up in the sunlight, amidst truthful surroundings, uninfluenced by lying priests. They would grow up to be women, fit to be mothers of men—fit to impart that Shakti which would make you men. Men are not being born amongst you but worms and vermins, because false teachers have encouraged you to deflower the virginity in girls who should never be touched with loveless lust.

"Better that you should abolish the sham respectability of marriage from amongst you than that your Race should go on sinning against humanity under the cover of marriage. By your unholy marriages, by getting premature children amongst you, you are committing Race suicide.

"Your Race is blind enough not to see how despicable it has become before the eyes of all humanity, let alone the eyes of God, Who certainly has not made you Hindus His favoured licensees, that His sacred and secret laws of generation should be violated and trampled upon by you without your getting retributive justice for it.

"Beware of the terrible laws of Karma that are already crushing you out of existence. The Karmic laws are no respecters of persons or Races. There have been many extinct Races before in this old, old World, and you can form some idea of it from the necklace of human heads round the neck of your Black-Goddess. Each head represents a Race, and in this respect your old-time sacred artist has not done badly. He knew and understood something of the laws of nature. But your teachers!!

" Karmic law insists that there shall be the Rule of stice, Rule of Right Principles in India, and progress made along those lines. The quicker you can wipe out by sacrifice your religio-social sins which hold you fast more strongly than iron fetters, the speedier would your progress be.

" The most advanced must help and up-lift the down-trodden. Obnoxious religio-social rules which keep those that are floating afloat, sinking deeper those that are sunken, must be swept away—no matter what it may cost, no matter what the suffering be to individuals or classes.

" India is being remade in the crucible of nature to be the befitting vessel for All Humanity, not for the selfish ends of any particular Nation or Race. There must be an end of that narrow idea of Nationality and the demands of Humanity must triumph. Intense suffering must precede the dawn of the idea that ye are all brothers in India. Cleanse your own Homes by the light of the spirit of Humanity, by the light of that idea that ye are all Brothers in India, irrespective of Colour, Caste or Creed."
